

# Pilgrims' Cross CofE Aided Primary School

Picket Twenty Way, Andover, SP11 6TY

**Inspection dates** 25–26 March 2015

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b> <b>2</b>
Leadership and management	Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	Outstanding	1
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.

- Pilgrims' Cross has rapidly established itself as a good school. Pupils do well academically and make excellent progress in their personal development.
- The headteacher provides inspirational leadership, demanding high standards, and setting high expectations for pupils' achievement and behaviour. She is well supported by the deputy headteacher, working strongly as a team together to ensure that all the teaching staff are enabled to perform well.
- Governors have high expectations. They have worked closely with senior leaders to establish good teaching and learning across the school.
- Good teaching and a lively curriculum in Reception ensure children make a good beginning to their education.
- In Key Stage 1 and Year 3, pupils of all abilities achieve well from their differing starting points in response to stimulating teaching.
- Year 3 pupils reach above average standards in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Senior leaders make thorough checks on pupils' skills on entry to the school. Sharply focused additional teaching helps those who need to catch up.
- Support for pupils' spiritual, moral and cultural development is excellent. The school's ethos underpins the curriculum in strongly promoting tolerance and respect for others.
- Pupils' behaviour is outstanding. Their attitudes to learning are exemplary and provide a firm foundation for their good progress.
- Pupils are happy and feel safe. Parents have a high regard for the way the school educates and cares for their children.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Lower-attaining pupils are not always helped well enough to fully develop their writing skills.
- Few disadvantaged pupils reach the higher levels of attainment by Year 2.
- In Reception, adults do not always provide the most effective input to promote good learning during outdoor play.
- Subject leaders' roles are underdeveloped.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed pupils' learning in 10 lessons. The inspector was accompanied by the headteacher for all of these lessons. The inspector looked at pupils' work, talked to them about their work and heard samples of pupils read from across the school.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour and held meetings with them. She also observed worship and a Year 3 music celebration presented by pupils for their parents.
- The inspector looked at a range of documentation, including assessments of pupils' progress, the school's checks and records relating to safeguarding, child protection, behaviour and attendance, records of how teaching is managed and the school improvement plan.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, other senior staff, three governors, and representatives from the diocese and the local authority.
- The inspector took account of the views expressed by parents in the 30 responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire, Parent View. Questionnaires from 12 members of staff were analysed.

## Inspection team

Eileen Chadwick, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Pilgrims' Cross is a new school which opened in September 2013. It is situated on a large new housing development, which is still under construction. Fifty per cent of the houses are privately owned, 40% are social housing, while 10% are reserved for families in the armed forces.
- The school is currently smaller than most primary schools. It is rapidly expanding and has more than doubled its size since first opening. It now has an admission number of 45 in Reception.
- There are currently five classes with pupils in Reception to Year 3. There will be Year 6 pupils for the first time in September 2017.
- The early years is comprised of the Reception classes which children attend full time. There is no Nursery. Children in Reception are taught in two parallel classes. There is currently one class for each other year group.
- Most pupils come from White British backgrounds. About 10% of pupils are from families in the armed forces.
- The proportion supported through the pupil premium (additional government funding for pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and children who are looked after) is average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is below average
- Considerably more pupils join the school at times other than is usual because of the ongoing increase in new housing in the area. The proportions of later entrants is high in Years 1 to 3. For example, over a half of pupils in the current Year 3 entered directly into this year group.
- The majority of teachers, including the deputy headteacher, joined the school in September 2014.
- The headteacher is leaving the school at the end of this term. From the start of next term, until a new substantive headteacher is appointed, an experienced temporary headteacher will lead the school for half of each week. The deputy headteacher will be the acting headteacher for the remainder of the week.

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

- Raise pupils' achievement further by:
  - ensuring that teachers set writing tasks at the right level for lower-attaining pupils
  - systematically developing pupils' ability to write in sentences, and to apply phonics (the sounds that letters make) when spelling
  - increasing the proportion of disadvantaged pupils reaching Level 3 in reading, writing and mathematics by Year 2
  - ensuring that adults apply appropriate strategies so that children in Reception make consistently good progress during outdoor learning time.
- Strengthen the impact of leadership by developing the capacity of subject leaders to drive improvement in their subject and make a full contribution to improving the quality of teaching.

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher provides exceptionally strong and effective leadership and is relentless in her drive for excellence in achievement and teaching. She has quickly focused on raising the attainment of all pupils from their various points of entry to the school. She is well supported by the recently appointed deputy headteacher and the wider leadership team. A culture of high expectations of pupils' progress and personal development underpins all leadership and teaching activities.
- Governors share their senior leaders' quest for excellence. They have been very effective in helping the school to quickly establish itself in a new and growing community. Governors are very experienced and provide both strong support and challenge.
- Equality and inclusion are the focus of all the school's work, strongly reinforced in an ethos where all are welcome. Any pupil whose circumstances make them vulnerable is nurtured and valued by the whole community. Leaders and governors are vigilant and effective in ensuring that good use is made of the additional funding to support the school's disadvantaged pupils and, as result, they achieve equally as well as others.
- The school has ensured management systems have developed in keeping with the school's expansion. The whole leadership team is developing successfully and adapts very well to the school's changing needs, for example, in providing for the increasing number of children entering the early years.
- As a result of the small size of the school and middle leaders' relatively limited experience, subject leadership is often still dependent upon senior leaders. Senior leaders and governors have already instigated plans to strengthen the contribution of other staff.
- There are robust systems for checking pupils' assessments, observing lessons and examining pupils' work. The programme of half-termly pupils' progress meetings is used well by teachers and senior leaders to evaluate the impact of teaching on groups and individual pupils.
- Staff performance is well managed. Senior leaders rigorously check teachers' performance and provide suitable coaching and training so they can meet their individual targets for improvement. There is a tight link between good classroom performance and salary increases.
- Leaders ensure that safeguarding of pupils is given the highest priority and fully meets statutory requirements. Staff checks are completed in an exemplary manner. All adults manage pupils' behaviour skilfully and establish very supportive relationships with them.
- The headteacher has successfully encouraged parents and family members to take an active role in their children's learning. Parents visit lessons and receive very regular progress reports on their children's performance. The school also provides courses to enable parents to understand how literacy and numeracy are taught. The overwhelming majority of parents are pleased with their children's progress and would recommend the school to others.
- The school's extremely well-planned curriculum places a strong emphasis on developing pupils' basic skills. It brings academic learning to life through practical activities, including outside visits, and inspires pupils to learn. It fully meets the new National Curriculum requirements.
- The school's strong Christian ethos, alongside carefully chosen curriculum topics, provides an excellent foundation for the provision of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils are very well prepared for life in modern Britain. Their ideas are highly valued, and they are encouraged to reflect, ask questions and to seek answers. The school strongly promotes values of tolerance, respect for others and understanding of different cultures. As a result, there is no discrimination.
- The primary sports funding is used well. Pupils' sporting skills are being developed through work with specialist sports coaches, and teachers are enhancing their abilities by working alongside the coaches. Some of the funding enables pupils to benefit from joining with other schools for training and taking part in competitions.
- The local authority provides 'light-touch' support. The school has found the local authority's challenge very useful and has also much appreciated the valuable help provided by the diocese in establishing this new school.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governing body is made up of accomplished professional people who have a very clear understanding of the school, including the quality of teaching and its impact on learning. Governors fully support senior leaders in driving forward the measures intended to lead towards outstanding outcomes. They are rigorous in their checks of the school's performance information and provide a high level of challenge. This includes asking questions about the progress of different groups of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, and the quality of teaching they receive.

- Governors have a clear understanding of arrangements to manage the performance of staff and how these link to school improvement. They are fully aware of the performance of staff and make sure pay rises are based on merit. They set demanding performance targets, ensuring that they are focused clearly on both high-quality teaching and pupil achievement.
- Their oversight of the use of resources is very thorough, ensuring that the school's finances are well managed. Governors have played a strong part in ensuring that the substantial expansions to the school are causing minimum disruption.

## The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Pupils' very positive attitudes contribute to good academic achievement and personal development. Pupils take a great pride in their work and this can be seen in the high standards of presentation in their books and sense of pride in their neat school uniforms.
- Teachers consistently use the school's systems of rewards and sanctions. Consequently, pupils respond well to teachers and support staff, creating a harmonious working environment where pupils try to do their best.
- Pupils are extremely pleased with their school and later arrivals commented that 'it is the best school' they have attended. They take great care with resources and act responsibly in keeping the school tidy.
- Relationships between adults and pupils are excellent. The very strong emphasis on developing pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development ensures they know right from wrong.
- Pupils of different backgrounds get on very well together and were observed playing and working together in harmony in different parts of the school. Later entrants to the school settle quickly because of the exceedingly good support they receive.
- Pupils show much consideration to other pupils, to adults who work in the school and to visitors. They come to understand the school's values of 'Trust, Love and Courage' through the examples of adults in the school community, worship and through the wider curriculum.
- Pupils make excellent contributions to school life through the 'junior leadership team', comprised of pupil representatives who provide useful feedback to school staff on learning, behaviour and religious education. Pupils take an active part in helping the school to improve, including in learning and behaviour.
- Attendance has improved recently and is above the national average. This is because of the school's clear expectations, and pupils' and parents' growing understanding of the importance of good attendance.
- Pupils say that behaviour is good. Parents who responded to 'Parent View' are unanimous in agreeing that behaviour is good.

### Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Training in all aspects of safeguarding is rigorous. There are very thorough systems to identify vulnerable pupils, and leaders act quickly to put support in place for them and their families.
- Pupils say they feel very safe in school and are adamant there is no bullying. They are confident that should bullying occur they know they know exactly who to go to and what to do.
- They have a good understanding of e-safety and know about cyber-bullying, as well as being aware of how to keep themselves from harm, including when using the internet. They speak knowledgeably about how to keep themselves safe in general.
- The school has secured exemplary site security and safety during the building programme.
- All parents who responded to Parent View feel their children are kept safe in school.

## The quality of teaching is good

- Senior leaders' ongoing drive to improve the quality of teaching is successful. Teaching is typically good and some, particularly in Year 3, has an outstanding impact on pupils' learning, which is stimulated by a range of exciting tasks and appropriate resources.
- The teaching of reading is good. High-quality reading materials have helped to instil a love of reading, and pupils of all abilities read enthusiastically. All pupils who read to the inspector were delighted to show off their skills, and even the lowest attainers said they 'did not want to put their books down'.

- Teachers carefully ensure pupils' reading tasks are not too hard or too easy and provide good levels of challenge for the most able. Pupils benefit from good, systematic teaching of phonics. They have regular opportunities to develop their reading skills in school, and to use the school library. Strong support for parents to help their children with reading at home contributes well to this favourable provision.
- The teaching of mathematics is good. Teachers pay close attention to developing the essential building blocks for numeracy, such as calculation, and give pupils plenty of good opportunities to apply these skills to solve real-life problems. For example, in Year 3, pupils solved the problem of keeping 'their teacher's pockets light' by finding the smallest number of coins when paying for set items in pounds and pence.
- A school-wide focus has led to improved teaching of writing skills. This is particularly effective for middle attainers and the most-able pupils. They are rapidly learning to write well-constructed sentences, to write at length and to use interesting vocabulary.
- Teachers do not always build lower-attaining pupils' writing skills so well. At times, their work is too hard for them. Teachers do not provide systematic enough opportunities for lower-attaining pupils to learn how to write in sentences or to apply phonics when spelling words.
- Skilful, well-trained teaching assistants work closely with teachers to provide a good range of challenge and support for pupils who are disadvantaged, disabled, or who have special educational needs. As a result, they make at least the same progress from their individual entry points as the other pupils in this school.
- Teachers' marking makes clear to pupils what they need to do to improve. The guidance is tailored to the reading levels of the pupils, and they usually respond well and act on the advice given.

### **The achievement of pupils** is good

- Children enter Reception with skills that are below those typical for their age. They make good progress which lifts their attainment to broadly average levels by time they reach the the end of the Reception Year.
- Pupils' progress in Key Stage 1 is good, and it is excellent in Year 3. The many later entrants who join different year groups with gaps in their knowledge and skills make the same progress as those already in the school.
- Pupils make good progress in phonics. In the 2014 Year 1 phonics checks, pupils' attainment was average. They are currently on track to achieve higher standards than this in the current Year 1.
- Standards in the current Year 2 are a little above average in reading, writing and mathematics. This represents good progress from attainment that is lower than that typical for their age on entry to Years 1 and 2 from other schools. Standards in reading and mathematics are similar to those attained in the 2014 end-of-Year 2 national assessments. They are slightly better in writing.
- Standards in Year 3 are above average in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils' rapid progress in Year 3 stems from excellent teaching in this year group. Pupils of all abilities do exceptionally well due to stimulating activities which build their skills very well.
- Challenging activities in Key Stage 1 and Year 3 in reading, writing and mathematics ensure that the most-able pupils make good progress. In the current Year 2, pupils' assessments, work and classroom observations provide clear evidence of improvement in writing. The proportion reaching Level 3 in writing is rising compared with the standards pupils reached in 2014.
- The additional funding for disadvantaged pupils is used effectively, and their attainment improves as they progress through this school. At the end of Key Stage 1 in 2014, they were approximately two terms ahead of other pupils in mathematics, but one term behind other pupils nationally and other pupils in the school in reading and writing.
- Disadvantaged pupils make good progress from their starting points on entry to the school, although, in the current Year 2, very few are on track to attain the higher standard, Level 3, in reading, writing and mathematics. This improves in Year 3 due to excellent progress, and their attainment at the higher levels is similar to their classmates.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress. Methods used to help them are tailored precisely to their specific needs. For example, they take full advantage of regular extra support in reading to help raise their attainment.
- Pupils who have parents serving in the armed forces and later entrants achieve well. There are very thorough systems for checking later entrants' attainment on entry to the school. The school provides well-focused individual support for those pupils who need to catch up.
- Pupils' reading skills develop well. They quickly develop a love of reading and, by Year 3, many capably read a wide variety of books. Good systems for teaching phonics enable pupils of all abilities to use

phonics well to read new words. Stimulating reading books that are well matched to their reading levels, and very regular opportunities to read to adults, significantly help to raise pupils' achievement.

- The school's focus on improving writing is having a good impact. Staff training to improve the teaching of writing and better use of assessment have helped to improve pupils' progress. Pupils learn to write well for different purposes in English, and in other curriculum areas. For example, Year 2 pupils used their writing skills when providing accounts of their scientific experiments to find out whether taller pupils had larger feet.
- Pupils' handwriting, spelling, punctuation, grammar and sentence construction usually develop well. However, in Key Stage 1, a few lower-attaining pupils are not developing their ability to apply phonics well enough when spelling or learning to write in sentences quickly enough.
- Pupils progress well in mathematical calculation, and in learning to solve verbal problems. They benefit through successfully applying their mathematics understanding to science, for example when measuring and recording their results on bar charts.
- Music is a strength of the curriculum. Good provision enables every pupil in Year 3 to learn to play the clarinet, while all Year 1 pupils have opportunities to learn the recorder.

### The early years provision is good

- When the school first opened in the last academic year, there was only one class in Reception. There are now two. As a new school, there had not yet been an identifiable pattern of children's skills on entry to Reception or at the end of the early years. This year, both children's skills on entry, as well as the end of Reception, have been assessed as being lower than last year.
- Some children currently in Reception entered school with low-level communication and language skills and/or personal development. Good progress lifts their attainment, and the proportion on course to achieve a good level of development, including in communication and language, and literacy and numeracy, is similar to that found in most schools,.
- Children settle quickly into their Reception classes because teachers establish warm relationships and clear routines. Children, including those with special educational needs and the most able, make good progress. They behave very well and develop into curious and keen learners. They are well cared for, and kept safe because safeguarding procedures are very secure.
- Teaching is good. Learning activities are designed to capture children's imagination. For example, during their *Jack and the Beanstalk* topic, children suggested and developed their ideas very well when building a giant's castle and creating potions for the giant. Children developed their curiosity and sense of wonder very well when planting beans and watching their own beanstalks grow.
- Teachers provide a good balance of activities led or supported by adults, alongside interesting activities for children to choose for themselves. Daily phonics lessons in small groups help children to make a good start in learning to read. Children have good opportunities to use their phonics skills when engaging in play, for example when reading and writing simple words and phrases during role play.
- Children make good progress in developing their mathematical skills. Teachers provide stimulating mathematical activities during adult-directed learning time and through play. For example, children's role-play in the 'post office' helps the children to develop counting and number-recognition skills. A few more-able children are already learning to write coherent number sentences.
- Staff usually support children well during the range of free-choice activities. However, at times during outdoor learning, children's progress slows when adults do not help them to extend their learning.
- Good leadership and management have created a cohesive and effective staff team. Staff receive appropriate training so they can fully support children's learning. The provision is kept under constant review so that it continues to stimulate and excite children's curiosity. Staff keep parents well informed and encourage them to become fully involved in their children's learning.

## 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>	136407
<b>Local authority</b>	Hampshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	449803

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>	109
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Gordon Bell
<b>Headteacher</b>	Amanda Johnston
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Telephone number</b>	01264 365434
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