

# Cranbrook Church of England Primary School

Carriers Road, Cranbrook, Kent, TN17 3JZ

**Inspection dates** 16–17 June 2015

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Inadequate	4
	This inspection:	<b>Requires improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Early years provision		Outstanding	1

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- The quality of teaching is not yet consistently good in all classes and in all subjects. As a result, the progress of some groups of pupils remains uneven.
- Teachers sometimes do not plan work that meets the need of all groups of pupils well enough, especially the most able and those who are disabled or have special educational needs.
- In Key Stage 1 and 2, pupils are not making fast enough progress in writing because they do not have enough opportunities to write at length.
- Teachers do not always assess pupils' progress well enough in lessons. As a result, pupils do not always move on to tackling appropriately challenging work and make the progress they should.
- A small number of pupils are absent on a regular basis, including some disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs. This holds back their progress.

### The school has the following strengths

- Early years provision is outstanding. Leaders have ensured a wide range of rich and varied activities are used effectively to fire children's curiosity and imagination so they make outstanding progress.
- Leadership, including governance, has been effective at improving pupils' achievement and teaching. Leaders at all levels demonstrate the capacity to bring about further improvement.
- Pupils behave well, work hard and support each other. They feel safe and secure, and trust the adults around them.
- The school's Christian ethos and core values are threaded through all aspects of school life. They effectively support the good development of pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural understanding.
- Pupils receive detailed feedback from their teachers about how to improve. Pupils use this information effectively to improve future pieces of work.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited all classes and observed eight part-lessons, four of which were joint observations with senior leaders.
- Meetings were held with senior and middle leaders, the Chair of the Governing Body, a group of pupils and a representative of the local authority.
- A range of the school's documentation was scrutinised, including safeguarding procedures, information about pupils' achievement and checks by the school on how well it is doing.
- Informal discussions were held with parents at the start of school. The inspectors took account of 50 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, and two written responses from parents.
- Pupils' work was analysed in order to gather evidence about their achievement and the quality of teachers' feedback. Pupils' behaviour was observed in lessons and around the school at break and lunchtimes. An inspector observed a Key Stage 2 assembly.
- Evidence from Ofsted's previous monitoring visits was also taken into consideration.

## Inspection team

Lisa Moore, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Bill James

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

- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium is above average. The pupil premium is additional government funding for pupils known to be 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 much greater than average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The interim headteacher, who joined the school in April 2014, was appointed as the substantive headteacher in March 2015. The Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 leader was appointed to the post of deputy headteacher in January 2015.
- The school is supported by the Chief Executive Officer of the Brook Learning Trust, a national leader of education.
- Children attend the Reception class on a full-time basis.

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

- Improve the quality of teaching by ensuring that teachers:
  - plan work that is set at the right level for all pupils, especially those with special educational needs and the most able, to ensure they make good progress
  - assess pupils' progress in lessons effectively and use this information to move pupils on to appropriately challenging future work.
- Improve pupils' achievement in writing by:
  - providing more opportunities for pupils to write at length.
- Improve attendance of those pupils who are regularly absent from school, particularly disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs, by continuing to raise parental awareness of the importance of good attendance.

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher, effectively supported by the deputy headteacher, provides determined and committed leadership. As a result, they have secured improvements in teaching and in pupils' progress and behaviour. Leaders have proved that they are able to effectively drive and sustain school improvement. Exceptional improvements have been made to the early years provision at an even faster rate than the other key stages as a result of highly effective leadership.
- The capacity of leadership extends beyond senior leaders. Middle leaders have worked closely with their colleagues to bring about improvements in teaching. Their supportive checks on the quality of teaching and learning, and good use of assessment information, have meant they have identified and tackled the right priorities. In particular, the recently appointed literacy leader has rapidly raised the profile and importance of pupils' reading skills.
- Leaders' checks on how well the school is doing are accurate and detailed, and are supported by a rigorous process for checking pupils' progress.
- Senior leaders and governors are ambitious for the school, but they understand where the strengths and areas for development are and how they are going to tackle them. They plan actions carefully and have made good use of support provided by the local authority and by local good and outstanding schools.
- The curriculum interests and motivates pupils to learn. They explore a wide range of subjects which link together well and give pupils many stimulating and rich experiences. For example, Key Stage 1 pupils enjoyed learning about Madagascar before visiting a zoo to see some native animals and then producing their own art work based on what they had seen.
- The pupil premium is being used effectively to close gaps between these pupils and their classmates through a range of measures, for example one-to-one help.
- The school's strong Christian ethos is evident in all areas of the school's work and this provides many opportunities for the good development of pupils' social, moral, cultural and spiritual understanding. Pupils spoke maturely to inspectors about how the school's core values are referred to in a range of lessons and at playtimes. School worship link effectively to these core values, for example in a Key Stage 2 assembly, pupils were asked to consider why kindness to others is important and how they might show this in their everyday lives.
- The school prepares pupils well for life in modern Britain. The school council contributes frequently to the decision-making process in the school, for example deciding who should go to lunch first and the rota for the use of the playing field. Members of the school council have recently visited the Houses of Parliament to meet with their local MP and to see debating in process. Pupils learn about a wide range of different religions other than Christianity. The school has a strong and sustained link with a school in Malawi. Pupils exchange letters about their experiences and this helps them to appreciate how people's backgrounds and cultures can differ from their own.
- Leaders have worked hard to engage with parents more effectively. Leaders provide frequent newsletters about what pupils are learning and offer relevant parental sessions, for example about e-safety and how to support their child's mathematics learning.
- The school is making good use of the primary sports funding. A range of new sporting opportunities are available and are well supported by pupils. A greater number of pupils are taking part in competitive sport. Following a skills audit, staff have been given useful training to improve their skills.
- Leaders ensure safeguarding requirements are fully met. Leaders ensure the school site is well maintained and safe. Safeguarding procedures are robust and rigorous checks are carried out on staff when they join the school.
- The school does not tolerate discrimination and ensures that pupils of all backgrounds and abilities have an equal opportunity to succeed.
- The local authority provided effective support while the school was in special measures. The current school improvement adviser has made a valuable contribution in recent months to help middle and senior leaders interpret and use assessment information to best effect.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors fulfil their duties effectively. They have rightly focused on working closely with senior leaders to secure permanent and skilled teachers. They are well informed about all aspects of the school's work by the headteacher and their own frequent visits to the school. As a result, they know where teaching is bringing about good pupils' progress and where it still requires improvement. They understand the school's performance information and how well the school compares to other schools nationally. They have a good level of expertise from a range of relevant areas, for example business and finance. They

use these skills and knowledge effectively to challenge and support leaders to bring about improvement. Governors have a good understanding of how additional funding is spent and the impact this has on pupils' achievement. They ensure that teachers' pay progression is linked to pupils' good progress.

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

### **Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils show enthusiasm and interest for learning. Pupils' talk in lessons is about their learning and they are keen to support each other with their work. Pupils enjoy earning rewards for their achievements and competing against each other to earn them.
- Good relationships have been built between staff and pupils based on the school's core values. Pupils are well mannered and polite, and treat each other and adults with respect. There is a calm and purposeful atmosphere around the school. Older pupils value the opportunity to take on extra responsibilities to act as buddies to get to know and support younger pupils.
- Poor behaviour is rare but it is dealt with fairly and consistently when it does happen. The school's behaviour management policy is used effectively by staff. Pupils understand the consequences of moving up the 'behaviour ladder' and they are keen to behave well. The learning behaviour mentor has provided effective support to improve pupils' behaviour

### **Safety**

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good.
- The checks the school makes on adults working with pupils are rigorous and robust.
- The school provides a safe environment for its pupils. They told the inspector they felt safe, and trusted staff to look after them, and to help them when they had concerns.
- Parents who responded to Parent View agree that their children feel safe and well looked after at school.
- Pupils said, and school records show, that bullying is very rare. When it does occur, pupils are confident staff will deal with it quickly and firmly.
- The curriculum and programme of worship is effective in helping pupils know how to stay safe in a variety of situations, for example online. Leaders make effective use of external agencies to support this work, for example a parents' session with experts from the local authority to provide information about e-safety.
- Overall attendance has improved and is broadly in line with national figures. A very small number of pupils, including some disadvantaged and special educational needs pupils, do not attend school regularly enough and their progress suffers. The family liaison worker is working effectively to support these pupils and their families, but it is too early to see the impact of this work.
- The family liaison worker provides effective help and support when pupils or their families face personal challenges. Several parents who spoke to the inspector highly value this part of the school's provision.

## **The quality of teaching** requires improvement

- The quality of teaching requires improvement because there is not enough that is consistently good in all classes and in all subjects. However, teaching in Reception is outstanding.
- Teachers do not always plan activities that provide the right level of challenge for the most-able pupils. Equally, sometimes, pupils with special educational needs do not make good progress because they find tasks too difficult or do not understand what to do.
- Sometimes teachers do not check effectively what pupils can do and understand in lessons. As a result, teachers do not always move pupils on to work that is appropriate for them to tackle next.
- There is a core of outstanding and good teaching that leaders are beginning to use to improve teachers' practice across the school. Where pupils make good progress, teachers and teaching assistants question pupils' understanding and thinking effectively, and use their assessments to make sure pupils progress onto appropriate work.
- Teachers' marking and feedback gives pupils detailed guidance on what they need to do next. Pupils routinely respond to these comments to improve their next piece of work.
- Pupils' books show they take greater pride in their work. As a result, the quality of pupils' handwriting and presentation has improved.
- Classrooms and corridors are full of interesting and useful displays that celebrate and support pupils'

learning across a variety of subjects and themes. Pupils and staff refer to these displays frequently to help pupils understand what they need to do.

- The teaching of writing has improved. As a result, pupils are writing more frequently and in a variety of styles. However, there are not enough opportunities for pupils to write at length.
- The teaching of mathematics has improved and pupils are making better progress. Teachers have used training and support effectively to plan stimulating lessons. For example, in a Year 5 lesson, pupils were engrossed in solving difficult multiplication problems. They made good progress because the teacher had shown them how to apply their existing knowledge. The teacher checked their understanding frequently and moved pupils on quickly to harder problems.
- Reading is taught effectively across the school. Pupils enjoy reading and are keen to earn their reading passport. All classrooms now have a reading area and all pupils have visited the local library to obtain their library card. Expectations have been effectively communicated to parents about how often their children should be reading at home.

### The achievement of pupils

### requires improvement

- The school was placed in special measures in November 2013 because standards were too low. Improvements in teaching and more effective use of assessment information have helped to raise achievement.
- Achievement requires improvement because too many pupils have gaps in their knowledge and teaching is not consistently good enough to overcome previous underachievement. Achievement in Reception is outstanding as a result of highly effective teaching and provision.
- In Key Stage 1, current assessment information and work in pupils' books shows pupils achieving levels in line with the national average in mathematics but below national levels in reading and writing. Pupils are making better progress, particularly in mathematics and reading. Pupils' progress in writing is not as strong because pupils are not writing at length frequently enough.
- Pupils are making better progress in Key Stage 2, especially in Years 3 and 4 in reading, writing and mathematics. This progress is best in reading and is close to national levels. In mathematics and writing, the proportion of pupils making good progress remains below national averages.
- The most-able pupils make variable progress. Attainment in mathematics is showing improvement but not enough pupils are reaching the highest levels in reading and writing in Year 6.
- Although there are signs of improvement, the progress of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is not as good as other pupils.
- In 2014, Year 6 disadvantaged pupils were approximately one term behind other Cranbrook pupils and four terms behind other pupils nationally in mathematics. In reading, these pupils were half a term behind their classmates and half a term ahead of other pupils nationally. Disadvantaged pupils were half a term behind their classmates and other pupils nationally in writing. Gaps between these pupils and their classmates have closed at Key Stage 2 compared to 2013 figures.
- The teaching of phonics (the sounds letters make) is effective. As a result, in 2014, a greater proportion of pupils in Year 1 met the required standard in the phonic screening check so that figures were in line with national levels.

### The early years provision

### is outstanding

- This aspect of the school's provision is more effective than other parts of the school because it is exceptionally well led and managed.
- The early years leader has made rapid extensive and necessary improvements in a short time. She has effectively identified and communicated clear priorities and ensured that the highest standards are expected from every child.
- The proportion of children achieving or exceeding a good level of development is significantly above national figures and has risen much faster than national levels.
- Careful and detailed planning of activities and a range of interesting and exciting resources in the classroom and outdoors enable pupils to make outstanding progress. Children are given freedom to explore and learn in a variety of ways and this helps to fire their imagination and curiosity.
- Adults assess and record children's progress in extensive detail. They use this information effectively to identify levels of development swiftly and to move children on to new learning quickly. Parents are

encouraged to routinely comment on and contribute to their children's work.

- Children talk maturely about their learning, they are proud of their achievements and want to do well. Adults give children lots of opportunities to develop their speaking skills because children are encouraged to speak at length and to practise and extend their vocabulary.
- Reading and writing are taught exceptionally well. Half the children in Reception have reached the standard in the phonics check expected of Year 1 pupils. Children enjoy reading and have lots of opportunities to write, often at length. Children are very well prepared for Year 1.
- Children are safe, behave well and expectations of their conduct are high. Adults routinely model the behaviour they want to see from the children in their care. As a result, children develop good habits and work well together, for example children share equipment and include each other in their play without prompting from adults.

## 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>	118600
<b>Local authority</b>	Kent
<b>Inspection number</b>	461470

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>	Voluntary Controlled School
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	154
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Marcus Bell
<b>Headteacher</b>	Alison Hatch
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	November 2013
<b>Telephone number</b>	01580 713249
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