

St Thomas Cantilupe CofE Academy

Coningsby Street, Hereford, Herefordshire HR1 2DY

Inspection dates

9–10 November 2016

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Leaders and managers, including governors, have not ensured that consistently good teaching has led to good outcomes since the academy opened.
- The quality of teaching has not been consistently good. Teachers do not insist on good presentation and handwriting and they do not ensure that pupils use written feedback to help them to improve their work.
- Pupils are given few opportunities to write at length across the curriculum or use their developing mathematical skills in other subjects.
- Over time, attainment has been low at the end of key stages 1 and 2 and in phonics. Pupils made particularly slow progress in writing and mathematics by the end of key stage 2 in 2016.
- Systems that are now in place to improve teaching and outcomes are not fully embedded, so they are yet to have maximum impact.
- A significant minority of parents have not fully supported the work of school leaders. A few do not think that they are communicated with effectively. Some do not ensure that their children arrive to school on time and a small minority take their children out of school in term time.

The school has the following strengths

- The current leadership is aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and leaders are taking effective action to make improvements.
- Pupils behave well and they are accepting of others. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well.
- Safeguarding is effective. Pupils are well cared for within a positive and aspirational environment.
- Children make a good start to their education in the early years. This provision is well led and managed and teaching is good, so children make good progress from their starting points.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of leadership and management, by:
 - embedding, evaluating and refining the systems that are now in place to ensure that pupils make at least good progress across the school
 - further developing effective communication with parents
 - working closely with the few parents who do not ensure that their children arrive on time to school or do not attend regularly, in order to improve punctuality and reduce absence.
- Improve the quality of teaching and increase rates of progress, by:
 - giving pupils opportunities to write at length in a range of subjects
 - ensuring that staff insist on good presentation and handwriting across the curriculum
 - helping pupils to be able to use the regular written feedback in their books to improve subsequent pieces of work
 - giving pupils opportunities to develop their mathematical skills in other subjects.
- Improve attainment across the school, by:
 - ensuring that younger children are taught how to use phonic skills effectively and that they are well prepared for the phonics screening check
 - taking action to ensure that all groups of pupils make rapid progress throughout key stages 1 and 2 in order to fill gaps in their skills, knowledge and understanding.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Leaders, including governors, have not ensured that the school has provided a good quality of education since the academy was formed. Teaching and outcomes have not been consistently good over time.
- The current leadership team have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and they are taking effective action to improve the school. The quality of teaching and the progress that pupils make is improving but, as a result of poor teaching in the past, pupils' published results indicate that they have not made enough progress over time. School leaders' evaluation of the performance of the school did not contain a detailed analysis of academic progress since the academy was formed.
- Although planned actions have not had a full impact on improving outcomes, leaders have clear plans to make improvements; however, these are not yet fully embedded. The quality of leadership is developing at all levels and some aspects of the school, for example provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, are well led.
- Leaders are positive and ambitious for pupils and staff. All members of the school community are encouraged to reflect on what they could achieve and this is creating an aspirational culture.
- The school has a strong set of values. Equality of opportunity is promoted well and prejudiced behaviour, which is extremely rare, is challenged. Pupils are respectful and accepting of others; they understand democracy and the rule of law, and they are willing to take individual responsibility.
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a strength of the school. Pupils learn about a number of different cultures in Britain and around the world, and they are taught about all the major religions. Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain and fundamental British values are promoted effectively within the Christian ethos of the school.
- Pupils study a wide range of subjects and they are given opportunities to attend a variety of extra-curricular activities. The curriculum promotes positive behaviour and safety, but it has not led to good outcomes over time.
- The primary school physical education and sport premium funding is used well to promote active lifestyles. Pupils participate in a range of sporting activities and they benefit from staff, who have had up-to-date training, and external providers delivering lessons. Regular swimming lessons have led to more pupils being able to swim various distances unaided and almost all becoming 'water confident'. Pupils are actively encouraged to adopt healthy lifestyles and eat healthily.
- Pupil premium funding has been used for additional staffing, interventions and enrichment. However, its impact has been inconsistent. Disadvantaged pupils made good progress in 2015 and many pupils who are supported by the pupil premium made progress which matched or bettered that of other pupils in the school in 2016. However, by the end of Year 6, disadvantaged pupils made slow progress from their

starting points in writing and mathematics and the attainment of disadvantaged pupils remains lower than that of other pupils in the school and other pupils nationally. Consequently, school leaders are taking further action to diminish differences between this group of pupils and other pupils. The progress of disadvantaged pupils will continue to be closely monitored and supported. Funding will also be used to ensure that disadvantaged pupils have the appropriate equipment and they will receive a reading book each term.

- The process of managing the performance of teachers was not rigorous in the past. However, it is now being used effectively to secure improvements in the quality of teaching. Teachers are set targets linked to the teachers' standards, the outcomes pupils achieve and their professional development. Staff value the training and support that they receive and this is having a positive impact on the quality of teaching throughout the school.
- Parents are becoming increasingly supportive of the work of the school. A large majority would now recommend it to another parent and an increasing proportion believe that the school is well led and managed. As evidenced by the high number who attended an assembly during the inspection, many parents feel welcome in the school. However, a significant minority of parents conveyed concerns to inspectors about communication with the school, the quality of teaching, the progress that pupils make, the way that staff manage behaviour and the impact of leadership and management. Also, some parents do not fully support the school by ensuring that their children are punctual in the morning or attend regularly.
- Representatives of the trust have a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and they have offered effective support and challenge. The trust carried out an internal review and an audit of governance which led to improvements in this aspect of leadership and management and they fund an external consultant to help school leaders make improvements. The school also receives legal, financial and human resources services from the trust.

Governance of the school

- Governors did not offer appropriate support and challenge to school leaders in the past. However, governance has improved and the current governing body is fulfilling its duties effectively.
- As they have an appropriate range of skills, understanding and experience, governors are now holding school leaders to close account for the quality of education provided by the school. Governors are fully aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses and ask challenging questions about the school's performance. Minutes of their meetings indicate that they are now focused and purposeful.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Staff have had up-to-date training and they are clear about their responsibilities. They know what to do if they have concerns about a pupil's welfare and established procedures ensure that prompt and appropriate action takes place if required. As a result, vulnerable children are well protected.
- Safeguarding pupils is a key part of the school's culture. Pupils are taught how to stay

safe and staff know that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. Outside agencies are used appropriately and relevant information about pupils is stored securely. Appropriate procedures are followed when staff are recruited and checks are made on visitors to the school.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment has not been consistently good since the school became an academy. Consequently, it has not led to good progress over time.
- Where teaching is less effective, there is not a clear focus upon what pupils are learning, pupils are not sure about what they need to do to improve their work and they are given limited opportunities to review and develop their ideas. Occasionally, time in lessons is not used productively.
- Teachers follow the school's marking policy and regularly provide written feedback to pupils. However, there is little evidence that pupils act upon this feedback or that it makes a difference to their understanding. Consequently, it has limited impact on learning.
- The quality of pupils' handwriting varies and teachers do not have consistently high expectations. Pupils' books show that while many pupils clearly take a pride in the presentation of their work, this is not the case for all.
- Pupils talk positively about recent changes to the teaching of reading and spelling in school and now feel more confident about using a greater range of strategies to help them with their reading and writing. However, work in pupils' books confirms that pupils have few opportunities to write at length across a wide range of subjects.
- Pupils read for pleasure and find things out from books and other sources of information. A range of books are available and many pupils, including the most able, read widely. Pupils, including weaker readers, are able to use the sounds that letters represent to work out words.
- The most effective teaching of mathematics challenges pupils to think deeply about the subject. However, this is not always built upon as pupils are given few opportunities to develop their mathematical skills in other subjects.
- Teachers use a variety of approaches to help pupils learn, for example in one mathematics lesson pupils worked in groups to physically make different triangles in order to reinforce their specific properties. In other lessons, teachers used song, pictures and film clips to relate the learning to real-life situations. The transition between activities is usually quick so little learning time is lost.
- Adults in the classroom work well together. Teaching assistants are effectively deployed and staff take opportunities to promote equality of opportunity in their lessons. Teachers and teaching assistants ensure that all groups of pupils are fully involved in lessons. They skilfully use questions to develop pupils' understanding and extend their thinking. Staff have high expectations about the standards of behaviour in classrooms and pupils are generally focused and listen well.

- Pupils are enthusiastic about their learning and want to do well. Teachers and pupils enjoy positive relationships, but these are not always used to challenge the pupils to make more rapid progress.
- Teachers set regular homework tasks to give pupils opportunities to consolidate and extend their learning. Pupils often read or learn their spellings and, at times, they complete extended tasks such as project work. Most of the parents who made their views known to inspectors believe that their child receives appropriate homework for their age.
- Since September 2016, leaders have introduced a new approach to the teaching of English and mathematics across Years 4, 5 and 6. Teachers involved parents in the initial stages of this development and careful thought was given to the needs of individuals and groups of pupils. Pupils are now being given work that is closely matched to their ability and the most able pupils are given additional challenge. However, it is too soon to be able to judge the full impact of this new approach.
- Assessment was not always accurate in the past so leaders have ensured that systems are now in place to ensure that the assessment information is secure. Pupils are given tests to find out what they know and what they can do and this is used to help teachers set challenging tasks. Leaders have introduced termly assessments to help staff closely match teaching to the needs of pupils.
- Information about the standard of pupils' work is shared regularly with parents and the accuracy of this information is improving. Consequently, a large majority of parents who made their views known to inspectors believe that they receive valuable information from the school about their child's progress. However, some parents would value more communication, particularly about how they can help their child make good progress.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. There is an open culture which allows staff to support pupils' emotional well-being effectively.
- Pupils are keen to learn and the school has a clear focus upon developing positive attitudes towards learning and raising aspirations. Pupils' self-confidence and self-awareness are developed through opportunities to take responsibilities in the school. For example, pupils show visitors around the school, they serve on the school council and they work with each other as reading partners.
- Pupils respect the ideas of others and they are taught to accept other faiths. They know about different world religions and have a clear understanding of fundamental British values which are rooted within the Christian ethos of the school. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strongly promoted through a range of activities which make them think and reflect.
- Bullying is rare and pupils trust staff to help them to resolve any problems if they arise. Pupils are encouraged to tell the truth, take responsibility and change their behaviour if required. Pupils told inspectors that they are now more aware of the consequences of their actions. However, a small minority of parents who made their views known to

inspectors do not think that the school deals effectively with bullying.

- Pupils feel safe and are taught to stay safe through a range of activities. They know how to stay safe when using the internet and they are taught about road safety and healthy relationships. They are confident that staff would respond quickly to help them resolve any concerns that they may raise.
- The school site is secure and all staff and a very large majority of parents believe that pupils are safe in school.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. They are considerate and respectful, and enjoy positive relationships with adults and other children.
- Pupils behave well in lessons and low-level disruption to learning is very rare. Pupils usually listen very carefully to staff and their classmates, and respond quickly if they have to be reminded to concentrate fully on their studies.
- Pupils conduct themselves well in class and around the school. They sensibly use play equipment that is provided and play considerately with each other during social times.
- There have been marked improvements in the behaviour of individuals with particular behaviour needs and the use of sanctions is declining. There have been no permanent exclusions since the academy opened and fixed-term exclusions are rare. There have been no fixed-term exclusions recently. Staff manage behaviour effectively.
- Pupils and staff believe that pupils behave well and that inappropriate behaviour is dealt with effectively. However, a minority of parents expressed concerns over behaviour in the school.
- The school maintains effective admissions and attendance records and absence is followed up systematically. Attendance is broadly in line with the national average and most groups of pupils have similar attendance rates. A small number of pupils miss school for medical reasons but a few pupils do not attend regularly as a result of family holidays, which have not been sanctioned by school leaders. Some parents also do not fully support the school by ensuring that their children arrive on time in the morning.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Pupils' outcomes have not been consistently good since the academy was formed. Overall attainment was below national averages at the end of key stages 1 and 2 in 2015 and 2016 and many groups of pupils have made slow progress in a range of subjects over time.
- Despite all groups of pupils making rapid progress in last year's Year 6, disadvantaged pupils, middle-ability pupils, girls and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities had made slow progress over time by the end of key stage 2 in 2016. This indicates that they had not made good progress previously.
- Progress was particularly slow in writing and mathematics at the end of key stage 2 last year. However, as a result of a focus upon problem-solving in mathematics and activities to extend their vocabulary in English, pupils currently in the school are making improved progress in mathematics and writing.

- End of key stage 2 tests indicated that pupils made good progress in reading and mathematics in 2015 and attained at a similar level to pupils nationally. However, outcomes in writing did not match those in reading and mathematics in 2015 and progress was slower than that found nationally in reading in 2016.
- Outcomes across the curriculum are inconsistent. For example, pupils make good progress in art but attainment in science at the end of key stage 2 was well below the national average in 2016.
- The attainment of disadvantaged pupils has been consistently below that of others since the academy opened. In 2016, disadvantaged pupils had made slow progress over time in writing and mathematics by the end of key stage 2 but the progress of pupils who are supported by the pupil premium is improving. For example, disadvantaged pupils made faster progress in reading than other pupils across the school during the last academic year. Pupils currently in the school who receive the pupil premium are making improved progress across the curriculum.
- There were no pupils identified as having high prior attainment in last year's Year 6 but the progress of middle-ability pupils over time did not match that of pupils with similar starting points nationally. However, all groups of pupils, including the most able and middle-ability pupils, who are currently in the school are making improved progress.
- Pupils who had special educational needs and/or disabilities in last year's Year 6 made slow progress over time in a range of subjects. Their attainment was low across the curriculum but they had made rapid progress in their last year in the school. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities in other year groups made faster progress than other pupils in the school in reading and writing and similar progress to others in mathematics in 2016. Their progress had not been quick enough before this.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language made faster progress than other pupils across a range of subjects last year. Girls made slow progress in mathematics at the end of key stage 2 in 2016 but girls currently in the school are making improved progress in this subject.
- Outcomes in phonics were below national averages in 2015 and 2016. Leaders are currently taking action to address this. However, it is too early to judge its impact.
- Children in the early years settings make good progress from their starting points. Consequently, the proportion of children who achieved a good level of development was above the national figure in 2015 and 2016.
- Children in Reception are well prepared for Year 1 and pupils at the end of key stages 1 and 2 are socially and emotionally prepared for the next stage of their education. However, too many pupils have left Year 1 without the phonic skills that they need to succeed. Not enough pupils have left key stage 1 with the reading, writing and mathematical understanding that they need to thrive in key stage 2 and too few pupils have left Year 6 with the knowledge that they need to excel in secondary education.

Early years provision

Good

- Good communication with parents ensures that staff have accurate information about the children when they start school. This means that children settle in well to the early years setting as staff are able to plan learning which matches children's needs.

- Over time, most children have entered the school with skills below those typical for their age. They have been well taught and they have made good progress. Consequently, they are well prepared for accessing the Year 1 curriculum.
- Assessment is accurate so staff know what children can do and what they need to do to develop further. Over the last two years, a larger proportion than can be found nationally achieved a good level of development.
- Staff monitor the progress of individuals closely but they do not fully analyse the progress of groups. However, targeted intervention allows children with low starting points to begin to catch up with their classmates.
- Staff are knowledgeable and skilled, so children make a good start to their schooling in a safe and stimulating environment. Activities are well organised to promote skills, knowledge and understanding across all areas of learning. The provision is well led.
- Leaders have an accurate understanding of the strengths and areas for development in the early years provision. Leaders are aware that in order to improve further they need to continue to develop strategies to improve children's communication and language skills and ensure that phonic knowledge is developed consistently.
- Teaching is strong and the broad curriculum provides a range of interesting experiences that help children make progress. Children find adult-directed and child-led learning stimulating and engaging. The outdoor area is well resourced and used effectively and children work productively both inside and outside the school building.
- As a result of well-planned activities, children are encouraged to talk and listen in an environment which nurtures their social and emotional development. Children respond positively to clear routines.
- Children behave well across the early years provision; they listen carefully and take turns. They are respectful and they have been taught how to manage their own behaviour. Personal development, behaviour and welfare are good in the early years.
- Parents are extremely positive about communication with the school. They feel involved in their child's learning and have been provided with help on how to support development at home.
- Safeguarding in the early years setting is effective and statutory requirements are met.

School details

Unique reference number	140183
Local authority	Herefordshire
Inspection number	10019980

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	243
Appropriate authority	Academy trust
Chair	Trevor Hayes
Headteacher	Pippa Lloyd
Telephone number	01432 268400
Website	www.st-thomascantilupe.org
Email address	admin@st-thomascantilupe.hereford.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- St Thomas Cantilupe CofE Academy converted to become an academy school on 1 January 2014. When its predecessor school, St Thomas Cantilupe CofE Primary School was last inspected by Ofsted it was judged to be good overall. The school is sponsored by the Bishop Anthony Educational Trust serving the Diocese of Hereford Education Trust.
- There have been a number of changes in leadership since the academy opened. The headteacher took up post in January 2015 and the chair of the governing body was appointed in April 2016.
- The school is an average-sized primary school.
- The proportions of pupils from minority ethnic groups and who speak English as an additional language are above average.
- An average proportion of pupils are supported by the pupil premium.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities,

including those who have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan, is above average.

- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school complies with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in 20 parts of lessons. In addition, the lead inspector made short visits to most classrooms with the headteacher on the first day and team inspectors made additional short visits to classrooms on the second day of the inspection.
- Members of the inspection team met with pupils and heard pupils read. They looked at examples of pupils' work in their books and spoke to pupils formally and informally.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, other leaders and members of staff. Twelve responses to the staff questionnaire were also considered as part of the inspection.
- The lead inspector met with three governors, including the chair of the governing body, and the chief executive officer and chairman of the Bishop Anthony Educational Trust.
- The opinions of parents were considered through 22 responses which had been submitted on Parent View this term. Inspectors also spoke to parents on the morning of the first day of the inspection and considered 16 free-text responses from parents.
- Various school documents were scrutinised, including the school's self-evaluation, improvement plans, information about managing teachers' performance and staff training records. Minutes of meetings of the governing body and information about pupils' progress, behaviour, attendance and safety were also analysed.

Inspection team

Simon Mosley, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Catherine Crooks	Her Majesty's Inspector
Anne Potter	Ofsted Inspector

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