

# Archbishop Courtenay Primary School

Eccleston Road, Tovil, Maidstone, Kent ME15 6QN

## Inspection dates

14–15 June 2017

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

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is an inadequate school

- Safeguarding is ineffective. Statutory processes, including the recording of background checks on staff, are not followed robustly enough.
- Although leaders and governors monitor the standard of teaching, improvement activities have not ensured that teachers plan activities that meet the needs of learners sufficiently well.
- Leaders and governors have not done enough to reverse unacceptably low standards in reading and mathematics in key stage 2.
- Key stage 2 outcomes are inadequate in English, mathematics and science, where learning has been too slow since the academy opened.
- Historically, the progress pupils made from their starting points has been well below national figures. Current pupils do not make consistent progress across the curriculum, particularly at key stage 2.
- New assessment systems introduced this year are not yet sufficiently accurate. Tracking systems in the school are not able to reliably inform leaders' observations of teaching and set targets for managing teachers' performance.
- The activities given to pupils in key stage 2 are not pitched at the correct level to meet their learning needs. The tasks set do not offer the most able sufficient challenge or support those who require additional help to catch up.
- Pupils do not attend school regularly enough. Absence rates are very high, including those for disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- Leaders do not make effective use of the pupil premium. Their monitoring of the impact of this funding and the sport premium funding is weak.

### The school has the following strengths

- The new headteacher and deputy headteacher have brought much-needed stability after a turbulent time in the school's history.
- All staff are committed to promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Most teaching in early years and key stage 1 is stronger than elsewhere in the school.
- Pupils are polite and courteous to adults and to each other. They value the friendships they make and most are happy here.

## Full report

In accordance with section 44(1) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

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

- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management at all levels by:
  - ensuring that the school follows its own procedures when maintaining a single central record and eradicates inconsistencies
  - clarifying the lines of accountability and embedding robust and reliable central record keeping of the actions taken to support vulnerable pupils
  - ensuring that the local governing body accurately oversees that all of the school's policies and procedures meet requirements
  - making sure that all staff are clear on safeguarding procedures
  - improving evaluation of the school's strengths and weaknesses and using this to underpin sustained improvements to teaching and learning
  - ensuring that the wider curriculum is broad and balanced, meets pupils' needs and better prepares them for secondary school.
- Improve the rates of attendance for all pupils, in particular disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, so that they at least match national averages.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning so that all groups of pupils make strong progress over time, through leaders:
  - more thoroughly checking the quality of pupils' work across the curriculum and holding teachers to account for the progress they make
  - facilitating training to support key stage 2 teachers to improve their subject knowledge, particularly in mathematics and science
  - supporting all teachers to develop their questioning and feedback to pupils in line with the best examples seen in the school
  - ensuring that teaching assistants have access to planning and information enabling them to more effectively support pupils.
- Continue to improve outcomes in mathematics, reading and writing in key stage 1 and ensure that rapid improvements are made to these areas in key stage 2 by:
  - improving the accuracy of teachers' assessment of pupils' learning
  - improving teachers' planning and organisation of lessons so that they take into account the needs of all pupils, including the most able, disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities
  - ensuring that teachers use assessment information more effectively to check the

progress that pupils make from their starting points and give them feedback about how to improve their work.

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

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

Inspectors strongly recommend that the school should not seek to appoint newly qualified teachers until further notice.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

### Inadequate

- Leadership and management are inadequate because senior leaders' and governors' actions have failed to address serious deficiencies in outcomes and the quality of teaching, particularly in key stage 2. There has been some significant staffing turbulence at leadership level in recent years and Aquilla (the Diocese of Canterbury Academies Trust) trustees and governors have worked hard to support the school. However, their monitoring and evaluation of the actions taken have not been robust enough to address these weaknesses or to ensure that safeguarding is effective and pupils' attendance improves.
- Many of the leaders in the school are new to their posts this year and developing in their role. There is a reliance on the support from Aquilla and other external providers.
- Senior leaders' current self-evaluation is too optimistic. The school has judged all key aspects of its work as good despite having an awareness of the significant underperformance in key stage 2 since the school opened as an academy. Leaders' observations of learning do not focus in sufficient detail on the progress pupils make or the effectiveness of support offered for different groups of pupils. Consequently, leaders do not have an accurate picture of the impact of their recent staff training and support packages.
- The headteacher took up post in September 2016 and was joined by a new deputy headteacher after Easter this year. Together they have bought about a sense of stability that is recognised by teachers and parents. However, many of the initiatives and systems in the school, such as the assessment system, have only recently been introduced. Additionally, there are plans to replace other systems, including the performance management system. Consequently, robust arrangements for evaluating the school's work are either too new to have had a measurable impact or are not in place.
- New arrangements for the leadership of English and mathematics were introduced this year, with phase leaders taking responsibility for both subjects in their key stage. These leaders value the support and training they have received from Aquilla. However, the new systems they have introduced have not been effective enough to improve standards in these subjects in key stage 2 from the weaknesses recorded in published progress information in 2015 and 2016.
- The new leader of special educational needs has provided support for teachers and teaching assistants. Leaders have recognised that not all teaching assistants are given access to planning and this is restricting their impact in the classroom. Currently, assessments are not secure enough to enable evaluation of the impact of various interventions to support pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. This has limited leaders' effectiveness at monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning for this group of pupils. As a result, progress in English and mathematics for this group of pupils presently within the school continues to be well behind that of their peers.
- Leaders' actions have not improved the historic poor attendance rates. Since the school opened as an academy, overall attendance has been particularly low and has placed

the school in the bottom 10% of all schools nationally. Despite the actions of leaders and the family liaison officer, this pattern of low attendance for all pupils and for groups of pupils has not improved this year.

- Leaders' and governors' monitoring of the impact of interventions funded by the pupil premium lacks rigour. As a result, in the past, disadvantaged pupils have not made the same progress as their peers in English or mathematics. There are no signs that this has improved for current pupils, particularly for those in key stage 2.
- The physical education and sport premium funding is being used to provide a wider range of sporting activities and access to equipment. Pupils enjoy access to football, hockey, athletics, rounders, dance and becoming involved in local competitions. However, leaders are not monitoring and evaluating this work in sufficient detail to establish its impact upon pupils' participation and attainment.
- Leaders have not ensured that the academic curriculum is suitably challenging for all pupils. English and mathematics are improving in early years and key stage 1; parents were particularly keen to share how well they feel phonics has supported their children to develop reading skills. However, due to inadequate teaching, outcomes in English and mathematics at key stage 2 are inadequate. In addition, the quality of teaching and pupils' outcomes are particularly weak in science, history and geography in both key stages 1 and 2.
- Leaders have ensured that the wider curriculum has some strengths. These include the provision for religious education and how effectively spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted across the school. There is a suitable range of opportunities for developing creative and sporting interests. For example, pupils sing enthusiastically in assemblies and are eager to join after-school clubs and activities. British values are promoted well, enabling pupils to discuss confidently key ideas such as democracy, why rules and laws are important, equality and diversity.
- The small number of parents who responded to Parent View, and those parents inspectors met during the inspection, feel that their children are well settled into school and are happy and well looked after by staff.

## **Governance of the school**

- The local governing body is made up of mainly experienced educationalists and governors appointed by Aquilla along with two members of staff. It is chaired by an experienced governor of another school and supported by two parent governors. However, there are currently two vacancies in the local governing body.
- Governors have access to appropriate training and resources. Records of governors' meetings provide evidence that they challenge leaders at all levels. However, as many leaders are new to their roles, the impact of this work is limited.
- Aquilla trustees and local governors are aware of many of the school's shortcomings. Records of meetings and visits provide evidence of the range of training and support they have coordinated for leaders at all levels. Additionally, they have sought to ensure external validation of safeguarding and moderation of teacher assessments. However, trustees and governors have been too accepting that practices have improved because staff have experienced training. Although they visit school regularly, governors' and

trustees' monitoring of the impact of their work has not been sufficiently robust to ensure that the quality of teaching and outcomes improves in key stage 2 and that safeguarding policies and procedures are effective.

- Governors are aware that the school website is not compliant with regulations. More needs to be done to ensure that all policies and required information published on the school website are fully up to date.
- Governors provide helpful coaching and guidance for the new headteacher. They ensure that suitable arrangements are in place for the headteacher's performance management.

## **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective. Governors and leaders have not ensured that the school implements procedures outlined in its own safeguarding policy or the latest government guidelines and legislation robustly enough. This includes:
  - ensuring consistency of recording background checks on staff, volunteers and governors within the single central record
  - maintaining detailed central records of the interventions to support vulnerable pupils, including children missing education
  - ensuring that all teaching and support staff understand safeguarding reporting procedures.
- The designated safeguarding lead is supported by a deputy and there is always at least one of them on site to respond to any issues that may arise. Both have received up-to-date training. Although record-keeping could be improved, the DSLs have effective links with outside agencies and make sure that information about pupils' well-being is passed on to the right people when appropriate.

## **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment**

## **Inadequate**

- The quality of teaching and learning is inadequate. This is because teachers, particularly those in key stage 2, do not take into account what pupils already know when planning activities. They fail to assess the quality of pupils' learning frequently enough in lessons. Consequently, the most able pupils are not sufficiently stretched while lower prior attainers and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities fall further behind.
- Teachers' feedback to pupils is not effective in supporting them to make improvements to their work. Very few pupils are able to explain the next steps in their learning or the progress that they have made over time.
- Key stage 2 teaching in mathematics is particularly weak. Pupils are required to follow standard methods and often repeat the same tasks rather than thinking creatively by solving problems and developing their reasoning skills. In Years 3 and 4, repeated errors made in pupils' calculations over time had not been picked up or addressed by teachers. Teachers' expectations in mathematics lessons are higher in key stage 1. Consequently, these younger pupils become actively involved in appropriate mathematics tasks, enabling them to develop skills and confidently use subject-specific

vocabulary.

- Similarly, in English the quality of teaching is stronger in key stage 1 than it is in key stage 2. For example, in a well-planned Year 1 lesson pupils confidently engaged in a debate of whether an owl should be let out of prison. Good relationships and clear routines ensured that not a moment was wasted and pupils became active participants in the debate. In contrast, teachers' planning in key stage 2 English lessons is less well structured and the tasks set do not meet pupils' needs or engage them to the same extent. Key stage 2 pupils do not develop confidence and skills through self-correcting their work frequently enough. Consequently, they are not developing age-related skills of spelling, punctuation and grammar and their extended writing frequently contains errors such as muddled tenses and/or missing conjunctions.
- The teaching of science, history and geography in key stage 2 is particularly poor. Teachers' lack of detailed subject knowledge in these areas means that many of the tasks set are too hard or too easy for many of the pupils. Too frequently pupils are not given an opportunity to apply their writing and mathematics skills in these subjects to produce their own independent work. This is particularly the case in science, where it is common for all pupils' books to contain the same information sheet written by the teacher recording the predictions and outcomes from practical work. Consequently, pupils' subject-specific vocabulary and skills are not being developed well.
- There is a comprehensive programme of personal, social and health education and pupils have the opportunity to learn about other cultures and religions in their religious education lessons. These, together with pupils' experiences of regular assemblies, breakfast and after-school clubs, fundraising and school council, provide them with rich spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

## Inadequate

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is inadequate. This is because safeguarding is not effective. Weaknesses in leaders' oversight of the school's systems and practice and implementation of its own safeguarding policy mean that pupils' welfare cannot be assured as fully as it should be. However, the school's values of 'fellowship, forgiveness and compassion' are at the heart of daily life and help prepare pupils well for life in modern diverse Britain.
- Pupils are proud of their school and they develop self-confidence in its nurturing and supportive environment. Pupils show respect to adults and each other and play and socialise well. Parents told inspectors that they particularly value this work of the school.
- Relationships are strong across the school. Pupils told inspectors that this helps them to feel safe. They feel that adults will listen to, and help them to resolve, any worries that they may have. Some pupils refer to the school as being like a family.
- Pupils know how to keep themselves healthy. They enjoy using the equipment at playtime, which helps them to keep active.
- Pupils understand that teasing, bullying and prejudice are wrong. They have a clear

understanding and respect for the school rules and know that adults will not tolerate any incidents of unkindness.

- The views expressed by the majority of the small sample of parents who responded to Parent View, and those parents that inspectors spoke to at the school gate, confirm that their child feels safe and well cared for at school.

## Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is inadequate because of the very poor rates of attendance. Rates of absence and persistent absence have been much too high since the school opened as an academy in September 2014, placing the school in the bottom 10% of all schools nationally for these measures in 2016. Too many pupils do not make sufficient progress in their learning because they do not attend regularly enough. Overall attendance figures have fallen slightly this year and there has been no significant improvement in the attendance of disadvantaged pupils since last year. The current attendance of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities has fallen from last year's figure.
- Where teaching is weaker, some pupils can become disengaged and occasionally a minority can disrupt learning with their off-task behaviour or chatter. Pupils told inspectors that they find this frustrating.
- In the past, disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities have been more likely to be excluded than their peers. This is changing. Parents, pupils and staff recognise that behaviour has improved, serious incidents of misconduct are rare and no pupils have been excluded this academic year.
- Levels of outdoor supervision ensure that pupils play well together in the designated play areas at breaktimes and lunchtimes. Useful records are kept of any behaviour incidents that occur outside or within the classrooms. It is not always clear what trends and patterns are looked for in this information or how the school uses this information.

## Outcomes for pupils

## Inadequate

- Outcomes in key stage 2 were significantly below national averages in 2015 and 2016, with no signs of improvement currently. The progress made by pupils from their starting points in reading and mathematics has been consistently well below that made by pupils nationally. Consequently, pupils' reading and mathematical skills are still below the standard expected for their age. There is no evidence that teaching has deepened or accelerated current key stage 2 pupils' skills in these areas.
- Leaders acknowledge that more needs to be done to embed a culture and love of reading across the school. When questioned by inspectors, pupils struggled to name their favourite authors and books. While Year 2 children read well and are able to use a variety of strategies to self-correct, Year 6 pupils are less fluent for their age. Teachers encourage all Year 6 pupils to read the same book at the same time and there is a lack of challenge for the most able readers.
- Historically, key stage 2 pupils have made progress in their writing in line with national expectations. Current Year 3 to Year 6 pupils' work in their English books demonstrates



that age-related extended writing skills are not yet firmly embedded and pupils frequently make spelling, punctuation and grammatical errors.

- Last year in key stage 1 the most able pupils made progress in line with national averages for reading, writing and mathematics. However, this trend has not been maintained this year as they have progressed to key stage 2. Pupils' work demonstrates that progress for all pupils, including the most able, in writing and mathematics is limited because teaching is not sufficiently challenging. Some examples of work over time seen by inspectors demonstrates that pupils' mathematical calculation skills have regressed.
- In both key stages 1 and 2, the most able pupils are not stretched sufficiently in science and humanities because they are frequently given the same tasks and activities to complete as their peers. Teachers' expectations are too low and pupils are not encouraged to apply their literacy and numeracy skills to the subject. Consequently, the progress that these pupils make across the wider curriculum is limited.
- Leaders' tracking information demonstrates that current pupils who have special educational needs and or disabilities have made considerably less progress from their starting points this year than their peers in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Currently, pupils' work in key stage 1 provides evidence that they are making stronger progress in reading, writing and mathematical skills than elsewhere in the school.

### Early years provision

### Inadequate

- The early years is inadequate because safeguarding is ineffective across the school.
- The leader of early years is new to the role this year and has valued the support and guidance offered by Aquilla. While this has led to improvements in teaching, not all staff are confident to use assessment to inform planning in early years. Consequently, children who join Reception Year with low starting points do not make rapid enough progress.
- Outcomes in early years require improvement. In 2015, the proportion of pupils achieving a good level of development was above that seen nationally. Last year this figure fell to well below the national average. Leaders' current forecasts indicate that this figure has improved slightly, although the proportion of current pupils set to achieve a good level of development is still well below national figures.
- The quality of support offered by teaching assistants in early years is variable. While there are examples of very strong practice, in some cases teaching assistants do not use questioning skilfully enough to challenge children to think and reflect.
- Children benefit from bright and stimulating environments which offer easily accessible, interesting activities that promote child-centred learning. However, leaders are aware that more needs to be done to ensure that better use is made of outdoor learning areas to support a wider variety of activities enriching all areas of their learning.
- Disadvantaged pupils are supported well and make good progress in Reception. However, boys make less progress than girls overall, particularly in reading and writing.
- The nursery provides a welcoming environment where children are happy, feel secure and develop the confidence to chat to each other, staff and visitors. Staff provide a

range of activities that appeal to boys as well as girls, and a range of specialist help is available to support pupils who have additional needs. As a result, all children make sound progress from their starting points.

- The majority of pupils from nursery stay at the school and settle into Reception Year quickly. They work well with each other and adults and quickly develop personal and social skills. Nearly all parents are positive about the provision in early years. They told inspectors that they value the good communication they have from staff and how impressed they are with how quickly their children have been supported to read in Reception.

## School details

Unique reference number	139822
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10032826

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	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	319
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Andrew Rathbone
Headteacher	Wendy Robinson
Telephone number	01622 754666
Website	<a href="http://www.archbishopcourtenay.org.uk">www.archbishopcourtenay.org.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:office@archbishopcourtenay.kent.sch.uk">office@archbishopcourtenay.kent.sch.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- The predecessor school, also called Archbishop Courtenay Primary School, closed and the current Archbishop Courtenay Primary School opened as a sponsored academy in September 2014. The school is sponsored by Aquilla, the Diocese of Canterbury Academies Trust (Aquilla). This was the first inspection of this new school.
- Archbishop Courtenay Primary School is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The school runs nursery provision and a breakfast club which offers childcare before school.
- The proportions of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds, and pupils who speak English as an additional language, are both well above the national average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils, those who are supported by the pupil premium funding, is well above national figures.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is below

the national average.

- Published progress information for 2016 indicates that the school met the government's current floor standards. These standards set the minimum expectations for pupils' outcomes in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- The school does not meet requirements on the publication of information about the contents of the curriculum for each year group and the impact and planned expenditure of the pupil premium and sport premium funding.
- The school does not comply with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish about the contents of the curriculum for each year group and the impact and planned expenditure of the pupil premium and sport premium funding.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors reviewed the checks made on staff about their suitability to work with children.
- Inspectors visited 19 lessons, several small-group phonics sessions and an assembly in order to gather evidence to contribute to their evaluation of the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. Some of these observations were conducted jointly with senior leaders.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, middle leaders, teachers and support staff from the school. Inspectors also met with members of the local governing body together with trustees and staff from Aquilla.
- Inspectors talked to pupils about their learning and looked at the work in their books across a range of subjects. They spoke to pupils on the playground, during lessons and met with two groups of pupils to gather their views.
- Inspectors talked to pupils about reading and heard some of the pupils read.
- Conversations were held with a number of parents at the beginning and end of the school day. Inspectors also considered the views expressed in the 28 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, which included 15 written comments.
- A wide range of school documentation was scrutinised, including that relating to: policies, strategic planning documents, safety, self-evaluation documents, pupil achievement and behaviour and attendance information.

## Inspection team

Matthew Newberry, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Leah Goulding	Ofsted Inspector
Kirstine Boon	Ofsted Inspector

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