

Margate, Holy Trinity and St John's Church of England Primary School

St John's Road, Margate, Kent CT9 1LU

Inspection dates

21–22 November 2017

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The headteacher and deputy headteachers provide a strong and effective senior leadership team. The headteacher's vision and aspirations for the pupils are shared by all staff.
- The curriculum is exciting and stimulating and motivates pupils to learn well in a range of subjects. It successfully meets their needs as well as their interests. A good range of enrichment activities promotes pupils' personal development as well as their academic achievement.
- Teaching and learning are typically good across the school. Consequently, progress is improving for all groups of pupils including those who are disadvantaged, those who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language.
- Teachers generally have high expectations, plan motivating activities that capture pupils' interest in learning and challenge them to achieve well. Occasionally, expectations of the most able pupils are not as high as they might be. The most effective and successful teaching and learning could be shared more widely across the school to ensure greater consistency.
- Pupils' attainment is stronger in reading than writing. Reading is a strength of the school.
- Pupils' writing is often creative and imaginative, but they do not consistently use accurate grammar and punctuation to enhance the quality of their writing.
- Pupils' attainment in mathematics is currently improving and they are making good progress.
- Children, currently in Reception, are having a good start to their school lives. They thrive in an exciting and stimulating environment and make good progress from their starting points.
- Pupils are enthusiastic about learning and enjoy being at school. They are friendly and polite, and behave well. Pastoral care is strong, so pupils are well looked after and nurtured. Pupils uphold the school's values well.
- Governors share senior leaders' vision and ambition for pupils. They know the school well and hold leaders to account for the school's performance.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve pupils' attainment by ensuring that:
 - the most able pupils are challenged more effectively in their learning so that more pupils achieve greater depth in their skills, knowledge and understanding, and reach the higher standards
 - pupils use their skills in grammar and punctuation more accurately to enhance the quality of their writing
 - leaders make sure that the best teaching approaches, which have the greatest impact on learning, are shared more widely across the school to achieve greater consistency in practice.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher effectively ensures that the whole school community works together with determination to provide the best learning experiences for pupils. He has the confidence of the staff, pupils and most parents, who appreciate his leadership. One parent echoed the views of several with the comment: 'He is an approachable headteacher and is very much a part of school life, attending parents' evenings, assemblies, after-school events, and is at the gate at the start of the school day to welcome the children and speak to parents.'
- The headteacher and deputy headteachers form a strong senior leadership team. They know the school well and accurately identify its strengths and the areas for further improvement. Leaders at all levels have high expectations and aspirations for the pupils and all subscribe to the school's motto of 'Fly higher'.
- Senior leaders have established a calm, friendly and orderly school community. One parent wrote: 'I find all staff friendly and approachable, including non-teaching staff. Office staff are friendly and helpful, going above and beyond to help.'
- In the years since the previous inspection, there have been considerable staffing difficulties, including significant long-term illnesses in the last academic year. This has been very challenging for the leadership of the school and leaders have worked hard to minimise the impact on pupils' learning and achievement. Senior leaders have taken successful action to ensure that there is now an effective and stable teaching staff, the quality of teaching and learning has been secured and pupils are now making much better progress.
- There is a commitment to enhancing teachers' skills and developing leaders. There is a good programme of training and a supportive, coaching ethos. Leaders look beyond the school to enhance staff's professional development, to meet both individuals' and the whole school's priorities.
- Teachers who are new to their careers said that they are very happy working at the school. They are very well supported by the senior leaders, their mentors and all staff, and said that they have improved their skills since starting at the school.
- There are clear expectations for the roles of leaders at all levels. Subject and key stage leaders have high expectations and know the strengths and weaknesses of their subjects and areas of responsibility, as a result of a range of effective monitoring activities. They provide good support for colleagues and strong liaison and communication with senior leaders. Their monitoring underpins the school's improvement planning. Leaders at all levels understand the expectations of their roles and that they will make a difference to the quality of teaching.
- Leaders are fully aware that some pupils are not achieving as well as they should. Measures have been taken to address this in the current school year. During the morning English and mathematics lessons, pupils from Years 1 and 2 and Years 5 and 6 are helped to catch up in their basic skills in two additional classes in which they are taught in small groups. Pupils in these groups are making accelerated progress.

- The curriculum is broad and balanced. There is an appropriate focus on developing pupils' basic skills in communication, reading, writing and mathematics. The leadership sets great store in providing a range of opportunities and experiences beyond the classroom to broaden pupils' experiences and aspirations. There is a good range of additional activities, clubs, visits and visitors to school, that make a good contribution to developing pupils' personal as well as their academic skills. A parent commented: 'I love all the school's trips and extra activities pupils can be involved in.'
- Activities are planned that are relevant and meaningful to pupils and link learning well across different subjects. For example, the school has good links with the Turner Contemporary. Pupils spoke enthusiastically about being involved in a project, 'Art Inspiring Change', and becoming YALs (Young Art Leaders).
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well through the curriculum and all of the school's work. In their questionnaire, most pupils agreed that the school encourages them to respect people from other backgrounds and to treat everyone equally. The school's values of trust, friendship, forgiveness, compassion, hope and respect are upheld by staff and pupils. Fundamental British values are promoted well.
- The pupil premium funding is spent effectively to support the needs of disadvantaged pupils, who are fully included in all aspects of the school's life. Their progress is improving, as it is for other groups, and in some cases they are making faster progress than others. Senior leaders work relentlessly to minimise barriers to learning for all pupils, including those in receipt of pupil premium funding. The recommendations from a review of the school's use of this funding, initiated by the school and carried out in January 2017, have been fully implemented.
- Additional funding is used effectively to ensure that pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities are accurately identified at an early stage, and appropriate support is provided.
- Good leadership ensures that the range of effective interventions and specialist provision fully meets pupils' needs, including those pupils who are learning English as an additional language.
- Good use is made of the primary physical education (PE) and sport premium to increase the provision for PE. A PE specialist works with pupils and teachers to enhance skills, leading to improved outcomes for pupils.

Governance of the school

- Governors know the school well and share the vision and ambition of the headteacher and senior leaders to ensure the best provision for pupils.
- Governors have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and of where further improvement is needed. They ask appropriate questions about the spending of additional funding such as the pupil premium, sport funding and funding for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities. They check that funding is spent wisely and is making a difference to pupils' outcomes.
- Governors are well informed by leaders and their own monitoring activities, which are

linked to priorities in the school improvement plan. This supports their strategic work.

- The governing body provides a balance of support and challenge. Governors have correctly identified a continuing need to be rigorous in holding senior leaders to account for the school's performance.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- There is a strong culture of care and safeguarding at the school. In addition to the two deputy headteachers, who are designated safeguarding leads, the school has appointed a safeguarding officer who is also trained as a designated safeguarding lead. This ensures that there is always someone in school for staff to go to if they have any concerns.
- All staff take part in regular training so that they are kept up to date with any new child protection requirements. All staff, including those who are new to the school, know the procedures to follow should they have a concern. They know what to be aware of to ensure that pupils' well-being and safety are paramount, and that pupils are protected from harm. All staff are aware of their responsibility to keep pupils safe and are vigilant in doing so.
- Leaders ensure that appropriate action is taken, including any referrals to external agencies, to ensure that pupils receive timely and effective support.
- Record-keeping is of a high quality, well organised and efficient.
- All staff agree that pupils are safe and most parents agree. Most pupils agree that they feel safe in school.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teaching is typically good. Teachers and teaching assistants are good role models for pupils and promote respectful, caring and positive relationships. As a result, pupils develop positive attitudes to learning, work hard and want to do their best.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge. In all areas of the curriculum, there is a successful focus on developing and enriching pupils' vocabulary, which is evident in pupils' accurate use of subject-specific language.
- Pupils benefit from specialist teaching, for example, in music, art, PE and French.
- Pupils are mostly attentive in class and listen to their teachers and each other. They are motivated by the exciting activities in all subjects, which help them to learn well.
- Classrooms are attractive and stimulating places to learn. Teachers use and provide pupils with good-quality resources, which support learning across the curriculum.
- The teaching of reading has been a focus for the school. Reading for enjoyment is promoted well. The success of actions taken is evident in the increased proportion of pupils who achieved the expected attainment for their age by the end of Year 2 and

Year 6 in 2017.

- Teachers plan a range of work across the curriculum based on motivating and inspiring texts. Pupils develop their comprehension skills and discuss the authors' choices of vocabulary and story structures. This is beginning to have a positive impact on pupils' writing.
- Leaders have correctly identified, however, that writing is an area for further improvement, particularly to ensure that pupils use their skills in grammar and punctuation more effectively to enhance the quality of their writing. Teachers are ensuring that this happens, for example, by providing good models of writing so that pupils can see the language features that contribute to effective work. There is scope for pupils to use their knowledge of how authors make writing more interesting and powerful to improve their own.
- Leaders have reviewed the teaching of phonics skills to ensure that there is effective provision for groups of different abilities. Pupils are using their phonics skills effectively to help them read unfamiliar words.
- In mathematics, teachers ensure that pupils use and understand the correct mathematical vocabulary, and they use a good range of resources to support pupils' understanding of new concepts. Pupils are developing confidence in their mathematical reasoning skills.
- The most successful teaching and learning are not always consistently evident in all classes, particularly the strategies to broaden the skills, knowledge and understanding of the most able pupils. There is scope for the best practice to be shared more widely across the school.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to learning. They enjoy their time in school and participate with enthusiasm in all that the school offers them.
- Pupils are friendly and polite. Inspectors were impressed with their smiling faces and cheery greetings throughout the day. Pupils have a real sense of belonging to the school's community and wear their uniforms with pride.
- There is a large pastoral team, which provides good support for pupils' emotional and social development as well as their academic achievement. Staff protect and nurture pupils' well-being, and provide additional support to vulnerable pupils and their families.
- In discussions with inspectors, and in their responses to Ofsted's questionnaire, most pupils said that they feel safe in school. All staff feel that pupils are kept safe. Most parents feel that their children are kept safe and are happy and well looked after in school.

- The large majority of pupils who completed the survey feel that bullying is not an issue or if it were to happen, teachers would always sort it out. Pupils said that they feel confident to talk to adults in school if they have any problems. Concerns about bullying and the way it is dealt with were raised, however, by several of the parents who responded to the questionnaire, Parent View. Inspectors found that the school has clear procedures for dealing with bullying and staff manage any problems effectively.
- Pupils who attend the breakfast club receive a safe, happy and sociable start to the school day.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- A relatively new behaviour policy has ensured that there is greater consistency in the way that behaviour is managed. One teaching assistant said: 'No matter who you go to, you will get the same approach.' The impact of the new policy is evident in the reduction of recorded behaviour incidents.
- Pupils generally conduct themselves well in the playground at lunchtimes, as they move around the school and during assembly times. Pupils demonstrate tolerance and understanding of pupils who find it more difficult to manage their own behaviour.
- Behaviour in lessons is mostly good, which helps pupils to learn well. Pupils are usually attentive, concentrate well and work hard. They know what the expectations are for their behaviour. Occasionally, when pupils do not have sufficient challenge, they can become distracted and lose their focus on learning.
- Most pupils attend school regularly. Last year, attendance was a little below the national average overall, and was lower for disadvantaged and vulnerable pupils. Leaders work hard with families and external agencies where attendance issues persist, and keep a close track on the attendance of different groups of pupils. Although differences remain, attendance is improving this term for all groups.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- In 2017, standards at the end of key stage 1 improved compared to those of the previous year. The proportion of pupils that achieved the expected standard by the end of Year 2 was above that found nationally for reading, and close to the national average for mathematics. Despite an improvement, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in writing remained below that found nationally.
- By the end of Year 6, in 2017, the proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard in reading improved from the previous year and was in line with that found nationally. The proportion reaching the expected standard in mathematics also improved but was below that found nationally. In writing, the proportion of pupils who achieved the expected standard dipped compared to the previous year and remained below the national figure. However, the proportion achieving greater depth in writing increased considerably.
- Staffing difficulties, weaker teaching in the past, and gaps in pupils' learning hindered

pupils' progress last year. The school's assessment information and work seen in pupils' books indicate that currently, based on the school's expectations, most pupils are making good progress. Progress is, however, a little uneven across classes and year groups.

- Leaders rigorously track pupils' progress from their starting points, which are generally well below those typical for their age when they start at school. They effectively identify the strengths, weaknesses and next steps to improve outcomes for individual pupils and the different groups of pupils. Leaders are sharply aware, for example, that pupils in Year 6 will need to make much swifter progress to achieve their end-of-year targets.
- Pupils who receive additional support in the intervention classes each morning are making more rapid progress than others, which is helping them to catch up.
- Most disadvantaged pupils across the school are making at least the progress expected of them by the school, and many are making more rapid progress. As with other pupils, there is some variation across the classes.
- Other groups, including pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities and pupils who are learning English as an additional language, make similar progress to others because their needs are identified at an early stage and appropriate support is provided.
- In 2017, the proportion of pupils who reached the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check was below that found nationally. Pupils who did not achieve the expected standard in Year 1 are given extra support and catching up in Year 2. Leaders have ensured that current pupils in Year 1 are developing their phonics skills well by targeting those who need extra support so that they make better progress.
- An increasing proportion of the most able pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, are achieving greater depth in their skills, knowledge and understanding. Leaders have correctly identified, however, that expectations should be even higher to ensure that more pupils achieve greater depth and higher standards in their learning.

Early years provision

Good

- Many children start in the Reception Year with skills and knowledge that are below those typical for their age. Children's speech and language skills, and personal and social skills are often well below.
- Children currently in the Reception Year are making good progress and catching up quickly, including those who are disadvantaged and those who have SEN and/or disabilities.
- In 2015 and 2016, the proportion of children achieving a good level of development showed an upward trend and was above that found nationally. In 2017, the proportion dipped to well below that found nationally. Although children did well, made good progress from their starting points and largely met the goals for learning in all other areas, they did not achieve well in their writing. Children's weaker language skills held back their writing skills. When they started in Reception, over two thirds of this cohort of children were unable to write their name, and more than half had no recognition of

sounds and letters. They made steady progress throughout the year, particularly in the development of their phonics skills, but their achievement in writing remained weak.

- In the current Reception classes, there is an unwavering focus on developing children's speech and language skills, and on providing a wealth of opportunities for children to write for a range of purposes. The impact is evident as children are rapidly developing a confident use of language and communicate enthusiastically through writing. 'Learning journey' books show clear progress from the beginning of the year.
- Teaching and learning are good. The classrooms and the outdoor area are stimulating and motivating, are well resourced and provide language-rich environments. Activities are organised well to promote learning in all areas, and capture the interest and imagination of children who develop curious and inquiring minds.
- Staff work together well. They question children well to extend their language skills and develop their vocabulary.
- There is a good balance of activities between those directed by staff and those in which children make their own choices.
- Children learn to concentrate and listen well to their teachers. They were engrossed in listening to the story of 'Stick Man', which provided the starting point for many other activities.
- Staff know the children well and have positive relationships with them. They provide a happy, safe and nurturing atmosphere. As a result, children settle well into the routines of the day and develop their confidence and independence. Children behave well and feel safe. They share and play and learn well together.
- The early years is well led and managed. There is an accurate view of the strengths in the provision and areas for further development. Children's safety and well-being are priorities and children are well cared for. All the necessary actions are taken to support children whose circumstances may make them vulnerable.
- There are good procedures to get to know children and their families before they start at school and build effective ongoing relationships with parents to support learning at home and school.

School details

Unique reference number	118694
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10037828

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	426
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ann Smith
Headteacher	Danny Short
Telephone number	01843 223237
Website	www.holytrinitymargate.co.uk
Email address	headteacher@holy-trinity-margate.kent.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	12–13 June 2013

Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school. There are two classes in each year group.
- There is provision for the early years in two Reception classes, which children attend full time.
- The large majority of pupils are of White British heritage. Smaller proportions of pupils are from a range of minority ethnic backgrounds. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is above average.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is above average.
- The proportion of pupils supported through the pupil premium is above average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics.

- The school provides a free daily breakfast club.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed learning in all classes. Some observations were conducted jointly with senior leaders.
- Inspectors talked to pupils about their learning and examined work in pupils' books. Inspectors observed pupils in the playground, during worship and at lunchtime, and asked them for their views on the school. They also talked to pupils about reading and listened to some pupils read.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher, the deputy headteachers, other staff with key leadership responsibilities and teachers who are at the start of their careers. Meetings were held with the chair and vice-chair of the governing body. An inspector met with the local authority's school improvement adviser.
- Inspectors examined a wide range of documents including: leaders' checks on the school's performance and the quality of teaching; the school improvement plan; information on pupils' progress; and records relating to attendance, behaviour and safeguarding.
- Inspectors considered 46 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, which included 32 free-text comments. They also spoke to some parents at the start of the school day. Inspectors took account of 56 responses to the questionnaire for pupils and 40 responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Margaret Coussins, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Helen Tait	Ofsted Inspector
Peter Wibroe	Ofsted Inspector

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