

Doddinghurst Church of England Voluntary Controlled Junior School

Church Lane, Doddinghurst, Brentwood, Essex CM15 0NJ

Inspection dates

12–13 June 2018

| Overall effectiveness | Requires improvement |
|--|----------------------|
| Effectiveness of leadership and management | Requires improvement |
| Quality of teaching, learning and assessment | Requires improvement |
| Personal development, behaviour and welfare | Requires improvement |
| Outcomes for pupils | Requires improvement |
| Overall effectiveness at previous inspection | Good |

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Leaders' actions to secure consistently good standards of teaching and learning need more time to embed.
- Teachers do not consistently challenge pupils' learning so that they make the progress of which they are capable.
- Current pupils, including those who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities and disadvantaged pupils, do not make enough progress.
- Although current pupils' outcomes are improving, they are not yet good. Standards attained in reading, writing and mathematics are too low given pupils' ability on entry.
- The teaching of writing requires improvement. Some teachers do not give pupils enough opportunities to write at length or sufficient guidance to improve their spelling, punctuation and grammar.
- Leaders do not check the impact of additional funding to support disadvantaged pupils and those who have SEN and/or disabilities sufficiently closely. These pupils are not catching up with their peers quickly enough.
- Some systems, such as those that track pupils' progress and attendance, lack rigour.
- Several middle leaders are relatively new to their roles. Their skills in using assessment information and monitoring the effectiveness of teaching are at an early stage of development.
- Some pupils' behaviour is not as good as it could be.
- Too much name-calling and the teachers' slow response in addressing this have left some pupils and parents worried about bullying.
- Attendance of disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is too low.

The school has the following strengths

- Leaders are now creating a strong, shared vision among staff for improving the school. They are tackling the legacy of underachievement and are now held more rigorously to account by governors.
- The school is calm and orderly.
- There is now a greater emphasis on problem-solving and the development of reasoning. This has improved teaching and learning in mathematics across the school.
- The school's curriculum provides pupils with a range of activities to broaden their experiences.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by ensuring that all teachers:
 - have consistently high expectations of all pupils, taking into account the high prior attainment of many pupils
 - readily move pupils on to the next challenging task
 - plan lessons that match the varying needs and abilities of pupils, particularly for disadvantaged pupils or pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities
 - provide pupils with regular opportunities to write at length
 - pick up on pupils' errors with spelling, punctuation and grammar so that pupils learn from their mistakes and are accurate in their writing
 - cultivate a love for reading, so that pupils read widely and often.
- Improve pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare by ensuring that all teachers and support staff:
 - respond readily to stop bullying behaviour when it occurs
 - do not accept pupils swearing or using homophobic language.
- Improve leadership and management by:
 - improving the attendance of disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities
 - ensuring that the support for disadvantaged pupils enables them to make better progress
 - ensuring that the new systems that support pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities are used effectively to monitor their learning and progress and to evaluate the impact on pupils' outcomes
 - continuing to strengthen leadership at all levels so that the quality of teaching and learning and pupils' progress continue to improve
 - improving systems for monitoring pupil performance and attendance so that leaders and teachers have an accurate view of how well pupils are doing.
 - ensuring parents receive valuable information about their child's progress.

An external review of the school's use of pupil premium funding should be undertaken in order to ascertain how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Over time, leaders have not ensured that pupils make consistently strong progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Since the previous inspection, instability in staffing and the inconsistent quality of teaching, has contributed to a decline in standards. Since her appointment in early 2016, the headteacher has worked hard to address weaknesses in performance. While there is still significant work to be done, the school is now on a more stable footing.
- Staff, including those newly qualified, speak highly of the support that they receive from the headteacher and her deputy. The provision for their professional development is strong. Leaders are providing a comprehensive range of training to support teachers and teaching assistants to develop their skills so that improvement is rapid. Staff have embraced this training positively. They told inspectors that they feel valued, and they say morale amongst staff is high.
- Although leaders have a clearer understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school, their self-evaluation is too positive. This is also the case with their tracking of pupils' progress. For example, figures for Year 6 pupils making good and better progress are inaccurate because they are too high. Standards in exercise books for a large proportion of Year 6 pupils are not where they should be, taking account of the fact that a significant number entered the school with high prior attainment.
- Although attendance overall is monitored on a regular basis, the persistent absenteeism of some disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is not. Senior leaders were unable to say whether persistent absenteeism has improved for these groups.
- Several of the middle leaders are new to their roles and some are also new to the school. They have quickly understood the actions needed to improve the quality of teaching. For example, foundation subject leaders have implemented a new curriculum and assessment system focused on skills. Subjects other than English and mathematics are now taught in their own right. The helpful guidance that subject leaders provide to teachers is beginning to bring about necessary improvements to the quality of teaching. However, this work has yet to be fully embedded within the school and evaluated comprehensively.
- Leaders are aware that the assessment of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities has not always been accurate. New systems of assessment and monitoring have been developed very recently. Funding to support these pupils is beginning to be used well, such as the increase in time for the special educational needs coordinator. As a result, more recently, their progress has been improving. Staff have only just begun to develop a clearer understanding of how to support pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities.
- The physical education (PE) and sport premium funding is used well. It provides opportunities for pupils to experience different sporting activities in PE lessons and in extra-curricular clubs. Take-up of the extra-curricular activities is high. In 2017, almost all Year 6 pupils were able to swim 25 metres.
- Leaders have not always ensured that additional funding to support disadvantaged

pupils is allocated appropriately, for example by carrying forward large sums of money from one budget to the next. Expenditure has also been repeated on strategies from one year to the next without a clear view of their value. Leaders do not evaluate the impact of specific strategies sharply enough to ensure that it leads to the rapid progress which is necessary.

- Parents' views of the school are mixed. While some parents say that it is a 'smashing school' and that they have no concerns, others are not as effusive. In their responses on Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, a large number of parents disagreed that pupils are well behaved and that the school deals effectively with bullying. A high number also disagreed that they received valuable information from the school about their child's progress.
- Pupils benefit from a wide curriculum with opportunities to develop their artistic skills and financial understanding. For example, through the recent global money week, where pupils developed their understanding of various currencies. The curriculum is enriched by trips out and by hosting visiting theatre groups. The curriculum contributes well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. For example, encouraging pupils to see the beauty of mathematics in everyday life promotes their spirituality well.
- Through assemblies and their lessons, British values are integrated across the curriculum. Consequently, most pupils demonstrate a sound understanding of the values required for life in modern Britain.
- The local authority has provided leaders with effective support in bringing about changes that are beginning to improve pupils' attainment and progress.

Governance of the school

- Governors now challenge the leaders of the school more rigorously as a result of the implementation of the interim executive board (IEB). Members of the IEB board make effective use of their expertise when holding the school to account. For example, the SEN governor is a specialist in this area and, through her questioning, provides ongoing challenge about the quality of the SEN provision. Governors monitor specific strands of the school improvement plan and report back on their evaluation. They know the school well through their regular visits.
- Minutes from committee meetings show that governors ask leaders pertinent questions and will challenge decisions from leaders to ensure that outcomes continue to improve. Governors take every opportunity to attend training, for example on safer recruitment.
- Nonetheless, governors have not ensured the effective deployment of pupil premium funding in order that outcomes and attendance rapidly improve for this group of pupils.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders ensure that staff receive the necessary safeguarding and 'Prevent' duty training. Adults understand clearly how to notice changes in pupils' behaviour which may indicate that they are at the risk of harm, for example from the risks associated

with extremism and radicalisation.

- The systems for making referrals to the designated safeguarding lead are rigorous and thorough. Leaders are vigilant in recording any issues. They seek advice from external agencies whenever necessary.
- Leaders have recently rewritten lesson plans to strengthen pupils' understanding of how to stay safe online. Not all pupils have a good understanding of this aspect.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- There is still too much variability in the quality of teaching, learning and assessment overall. Not enough teaching is well suited to pupils' needs. Teachers are beginning to use assessment information more effectively, but pupils are still being given tasks that do not take account of their starting points. As a result, rates of progress vary across and within year groups, so that pupils do not always make the progress of which they are capable.
- Where there is stronger practice, teachers plan learning activities that interest and motivate pupils. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' participation and involvement. For example, during the inspection, Year 3 pupils were highly enthusiastic and enjoyed discovering the different parts of a lily through a dissection activity.
- Leaders have introduced a range of approaches to support teachers in meeting the needs of learners with different starting points. This new approach is not universally effective because some teachers are better than others at using the school's strategy effectively.
- Where learning is most effective, teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve, and they give appropriate challenging tasks that enthuse pupils. However, some teaching does not direct pupils to the right task for their ability or monitor completion of tasks closely enough. Pupils become frustrated because they are directed to complete an easy task before they can move on to the difficult task. Sometimes, pupils who have completed the tasks are left sitting without any work.
- Leaders have reviewed the texts that are taught in guided reading, so they are more challenging and interesting for pupils. However, reading widely and often is limited by reading slim volume books from a reading scheme. While the vocabulary choice in some of these texts is demanding, they are not fuelling a passion for reading.
- Teachers do not always reinforce high expectations of the accuracy of pupils' spelling, punctuation and grammar. This slows pupils' progress in writing.
- The teaching of mathematics is improving due to the increased focus on problem-solving and reasoning. Where mathematics is taught well, misconceptions are readily addressed, pupils are encouraged to try again, and extension tasks are well planned. However, more pupils would benefit from being asked to complete these tasks.
- Teachers display good subject knowledge across other areas of the curriculum, engaging pupils well in learning across a varied range of topics. For example, Year 3 pupils are challenged well in geography through asking them to investigate how London has developed and changed. In art, pupils use a range of materials, such as

charcoal and watercolour, to create pictures based on the work of the masters.

- Teaching assistants work well with teachers to provide high-quality support for pupils in lessons and at different times of the school day. They know the pupils well and help them to access tasks and answer questions.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement.
- Pupils told inspectors that there is some bullying in the school, generally in the form of name-calling, and that there is some derogatory and homophobic language used. Pupils stated that they trust adults to deal with bullying. However, some pupils do not believe that staff deal with it as quickly as they could. Such views are also echoed by some parents.
- Leaders work hard to keep pupils safe in the school and to ensure that they know what they may and may not do. However, some pupils have a limited understanding of how to keep themselves safe when using modern information technology.
- Teaching assistants support the social and emotional needs of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities effectively and ensure that they are well looked after. Adults provide encouragement and support for pupils who find school daunting by greeting them at the school gate. Parents reported that communication with their child's teaching assistant was frequent and helpful. However, the delay in reporting and communication after review meetings means that sometimes parents are hampered in supporting their child's learning and development at home.
- Pupils enjoy sports and fitness. They are enthusiastic about the new gym equipment and can speak confidently about why it is important to stay active.
- Relationships between teachers and pupils are good. Inspectors saw many examples of positive interactions between staff and pupils and between pupils themselves. For example, pupils are most supportive of those who have particular medical needs.
- School Council are proud of their support for charity. They also appreciate the opportunities that leaders give them to voice their views on the school's provision.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- When work is too easy or does not interest them, pupils are inattentive, for example chatting amongst themselves, fiddling or indulging in distracting behaviour.
- The majority of pupils are welcoming and polite in their discussions with inspectors during breaktimes and lunchtimes.
- A number of pupils expressed concern regarding the bad language (swearing) used by older pupils during break and lunchtimes. Pupils said that teachers and midday support assistants too readily accept such language.
- The attendance of pupils is in line with the national average. For the past three years,

attendance for disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities has stubbornly remained below average. Levels of persistent absence are above average overall and have increased over the past three years. When requested, the school was unable to provide current levels of persistent absence for disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities.

- Pupils in general move calmly around the school, for instance when lining up for assembly and going to the canteen for lunch. They are respectful of classrooms and grounds and they keep them free of litter.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- The majority of pupils enter the school with high starting points. They do not make strong progress by the end of Year 6. In 2017, pupils' progress by the end of Year 6 in reading, writing and mathematics was not good enough. In 2017, pupils' progress in writing was in the bottom 10% of schools nationally.
- The quality of pupils' work in their books across the classes is too variable. Too often, the quality of pupils' writing is limited by inaccurate spelling, punctuation and grammar. There are too few examples of writing at length and in a range of forms.
- There is evidence in mathematics books across Years 5 and 6 that the emphasis on problem-solving and reasoning is underpinning some better progress. This is particularly the case for girls' progress in mathematics in Year 5. However, this is not always the case for the middle ability pupils, because teaching sometimes does not move the pupils on to more challenging tasks.
- The lack of a reading culture is influencing the quality of writing produced. Where pupils are writing at some length, interest is not sustained as pupils are not adept at manipulating voice, style and structure. They are not used to reading widely and using the craft from various writers to influence their writing.
- The progress of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is steadily beginning to improve. Work in books and observations in lessons indicate that most of these pupils are making better progress. This is because teachers are planning more with these pupils needs in mind, and there is more focused support.
- Disadvantaged pupils, on the other hand, have attained low standards in reading, writing and mathematics for the past two years, with their progress for all three areas in the bottom 20% nationally. The quality of current work in exercise books is too variable in different year groups and in different subjects. Even where there is improvement, progress is not where it should be when compared to other pupils nationally.
- The quality of artwork across the classes for a high proportion of pupils is of a good standard.

School details

| | |
|-------------------------|----------|
| Unique reference number | 115124 |
| Local authority | Essex |
| Inspection number | 10041789 |

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

| | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| Type of school | Junior |
| School category | Voluntary controlled |
| Age range of pupils | 7 to 11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 205 |
| Appropriate authority | Interim executive board |
| Chair | Graham Lancaster |
| Headteacher | Jackie Avis |
| Telephone number | 01277 821064 |
| Website | www.doddinghurst-jun.essex.sch.uk |
| Email address | admin@doddinghurst-jun.essex.sch.uk |
| Date of previous inspection | 12–13 December 2013 |

Information about this school

- There have been a significant number of changes in staffing since the last inspection. Fifty percent of teachers are new to the school. The current headteacher was appointed in January 2016. The local authority issued a warning notice in November 2016. This resulted in the governing body resigning. An interim executive board was implemented in January 2017. Plans are in place to reintroduce a local governing body in the autumn of 2018.
- The school is average in size.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is below average.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities and those who have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan is above the national average.
- The school meets the current government floor standards.
- The school meets the Department for Education's definition of a coasting school,

based on key stage 2 academic performance results in 2015 to 2017.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed lessons in every class and took the opportunity to scrutinise pupils' work when in class and at other times. Some of the lesson observations were undertaken jointly with the headteacher. The inspectors also attended an assembly.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, senior leaders, middle leaders, and the chair of the interim executive board, a group of parents whose children have SEN and/or disabilities and two groups of pupils, including school council. The lead inspector spoke to a representative from the local authority by telephone.
- A wide range of documentation was scrutinised. This included: the school's self-evaluation; the school development plan; minutes of governing body's meetings; teachers' planning folders for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities; records of assessments of pupils' work; and information about their progress. Documents relating to safeguarding and child protection were also checked. Detailed records of external reviews were also scrutinised.
- Inspectors spoke informally with parents and pupils throughout the inspection to seek their views. They listened to a selection of pupils read.
- Inspectors also took into account 70 responses to Ofsted's online parent questionnaire, Parent View, including 25 free-text comments, and 18 responses to the confidential staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Liz Smith, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Mark Jones

Ofsted Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making a complaint about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/ofsted.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2018