

St Thomas Cantilupe CofE Academy

Coningsby Street, Hereford, Herefordshire HR1 2DY

Inspection dates	11-12 December 2018
Overall effectiveness	Inadequate
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Inadequate
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Inadequate
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Requires improvement
Outcomes for pupils	Inadequate
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an inadequate school

- Leaders and governors have not addressed the school's weaknesses with the urgency required. As a result, the school's effectiveness has declined since the previous inspection. Capacity for improvement is weak.
- Lines of accountability between the multiacademy trust (MAT) and the local governing body are unclear. Consequently, trustees and governors have failed to hold leaders to account for the decline in the quality of education.
- Improvement plans are too broad. Leaders' monitoring of the school's work is ineffective.
- Leaders do not provide the guidance and support that teachers need to improve the quality of their practice.
- Weak teaching and assessment mean that pupils make poor progress. Teachers do not use information about what pupils can do to plan work that matches their abilities.

The school has the following strengths

- Leadership and teaching in the early years are good. As a result, children make a strong start to their education.
- Pupils are keen to learn and want to do well. They are polite and respectful to others.

- Teachers' expectations are too low. This prevents pupils from achieving the standards of which they are capable, including the most able pupils across the school.
- Teachers do not provide pupils with clear guidance about how to improve their work. They do not insist that pupils present their work neatly.
- Leaders do not make effective use of additional funding to ensure that disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) make the progress they should.
- The curriculum is poorly planned. It does not enable pupils to deepen their knowledge, understanding and skills in a range of subjects.
- Absence is above the national average. Too many pupils are persistently absent from school, particularly disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND.
- The proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check has risen to be in line with that of pupils nationally.
- Leaders and staff support pupils' personal development and welfare well.



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?

- Urgently improve the quality of leadership and management, including governance, by ensuring that:
 - the skills and knowledge of leaders at all levels, including governors, are developed so that they can monitor standards and drive improvements effectively
 - leaders' plans focus sharply on the most important priorities
 - leaders monitor and evaluate teaching accurately and use this information to provide teachers with the training and support they need to improve their practice
 - leaders' checks on teaching focus on the progress being made by different groups of pupils, particularly the most able pupils, disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND
 - additional funding is used effectively to enable disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND to make the best progress possible
 - the curriculum is well planned and deepens pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills across a range of subjects
 - roles, responsibilities and lines of accountability between the MAT and the local governing body are clear so that governors understand precisely who is responsible for what
 - the MAT holds leaders and the local governing body fully to account for school improvement
 - the MAT provides effective challenge and support to bring about rapid improvements to leadership, teaching and pupils' outcomes.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by ensuring that teachers:
 - raise expectations and the level of challenge for all pupils, and particularly the most able
 - use assessment information to plan work that matches pupils' abilities closely
 - routinely check pupils' learning in lessons and, where work is too easy or too difficult, adapt their teaching accordingly
 - provide the right support for disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND so that they make strong progress
 - provide pupils with clear guidance about how to improve their work
 - insist that pupils present work to the best of their ability.
- Improve attendance so that it is at least in line with the national average and reduce



the proportion of pupils who are persistently absent from school, particularly disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND.

- Further improve provision in the early years by:
 - adults making more precise assessments and using these to ensure that activities are sufficiently challenging for the most able children.

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

It is recommended that newly qualified teachers should not be appointed.



Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Inadequate

- Leaders, governors and the MAT have failed to take effective action to address the weaknesses identified in the school's previous inspection in November 2016. As a result, the quality of education has declined and is now inadequate. Leadership's capacity to improve the school is poor.
- Leaders do not have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. This is because they do not routinely evaluate the school's effectiveness. They do not make thorough checks to ensure that their actions are improving the quality of teaching and pupils' outcomes.
- The school's leadership team has undergone change since the previous inspection and is still developing. Several leaders are new in post. This includes the deputy headteacher, the leaders of English and mathematics and the early years leader. A lack of continuity in leadership has slowed the rate of school improvement.
- The MAT has not challenged leaders sufficiently. It has not provided enough support to improve the quality of leadership and teaching across the school. Visits from external consultants commissioned by the MAT have lacked rigour. They have not probed what the school does well and what needs to improve. This has led to written reports that do not provide clear feedback about fundamental weaknesses in leadership and teaching. Guidance about the actions that leaders need to take has been poor. Consequently, weak leadership and teaching continues to hinder pupils' progress.
- Leaders' plans are too broad and do not identify precisely what needs to improve. There are too many targets, which means that leaders, staff and governors do not have a clear and shared understanding of what the most important priorities are. Plans do not address significant weaknesses, for example increasing rates of absence and persistent absence.
- The monitoring of teaching and learning is ineffective. Checks on teaching focus on compliance with school policies, not on pupils' learning. As a result, leaders do not have a clear understanding of what the weaknesses in teaching are and are not taking sufficient action to address them. Teachers do not receive the support, guidance and training they need to improve their practice and secure higher outcomes for pupils.
- Leaders are aware that disadvantaged pupils make significantly less progress than other pupils in the school and nationally. However, until very recently, plans to improve disadvantaged pupils' outcomes were weak. Leaders and governors have not ensured that additional funding has been spent effectively. They have not evaluated the impact of the funding beyond its success in supporting pupils' social and emotional needs.
- The curriculum is poorly planned. It does not enable pupils to develop their knowledge, understanding and skills in enough depth in subjects such as science and history. Coverage of some subjects, for example geography, is sparse, which further impairs pupils' progress.
- The special educational needs coordinator has a secure understanding of the needs of pupils with SEND. She supports staff well to identify individual needs and to plan interventions. However, weak teaching means that these pupils do not make the



progress they should.

- New leaders have made a positive start to their roles. They have been quick to evaluate the quality of provision in their areas of responsibility and to identify important aspects that require urgent attention. However, it is too soon to determine the impact of these leaders' actions on improving teaching and pupils' progress.
- Leaders make appropriate use of the primary physical education (PE) and sports premium to develop teachers' skills and broaden the range of sporting activities that pupils take part in. However, leaders do not evaluate the impact of this funding on pupils' participation in sporting activities closely enough.
- Leaders support pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development effectively. Pupils learn about different religions and show respect for the beliefs of others. The school council provides opportunities for pupils to experience democracy. In this respect, pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.

Governance of the school

- The governance of the school is ineffective.
- The MAT does not check to ensure that the local governing body are fulfilling their responsibilities. They do not hold leaders and governors to account effectively for the quality of education in the school. Consequently, the MAT has failed to notice that the school's effectiveness has declined since the previous inspection.
- The local governing body is unclear about the areas of the school's work that it is responsible for and those that are the responsibility of the MAT. This means that no one is making sure that leaders are taking the necessary action to address weaknesses in leadership, teaching and pupils' outcomes.
- The MAT and the local governing body rely too heavily on information they receive from the headteacher and external consultants. They do not question or challenge the information they receive sufficiently to gain a full and accurate understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses.
- The MAT and the local governing body have not monitored the use of additional funding for disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND. As a result, they do not know if this expenditure is making a positive difference to these pupils' outcomes and if it is providing value for money.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Staff receive regular training on a wide range of safeguarding topics, including how to protect pupils from radicalisation and extremism. Leaders check how well staff understand policies and provide training to assure themselves that everyone employed at the school is confident in their responsibilities for keeping pupils safe.
- Staff know the signs to look for that indicate a child might be at risk of harm and understand that any concerns must be reported promptly. However, there is not a single agreed approach for reporting concerns, which means that not all records are



precise.

- Leaders know pupils well and provide strong pastoral support. They take timely action in response to concerns about pupils' safety and welfare. The school's well-being coordinator is diligent in her role and keeps comprehensive records of the needs of vulnerable pupils. This helps to ensure that these pupils and their families receive the right support.
- Systems for making and recording the required checks on adults working in the school are thorough. Leaders have responded appropriately to a safeguarding audit led by the MAT and recommendations have been acted upon.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment Inadequate

- Weak teaching since the previous inspection has led to a significant number of pupils underachieving. Teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are too low. Disadvantaged pupils, pupils with SEND and the most able pupils make weak progress from their different starting points.
- Teaching is poorly planned and does not take enough account of what pupils know and understand. As a result, middle- and high-attaining pupils often spend time completing work they can already do, which means that they do not make the progress of which they are capable.
- Tasks do not match the needs of low-attaining pupils and pupils with SEND closely enough. These pupils are over-reliant on adult support. Opportunities to develop their independence and resilience are few and far between, particularly in writing.
- Teachers do not routinely check pupils' learning in lessons. They do not adapt tasks when pupils are finding them too easy or too difficult. This hinders pupils' progress.
- Teaching lacks challenge, especially for the most able pupils. Consequently, this group of pupils complete their work quickly and then wait to be given additional tasks, some of which are still not challenging enough. Work does not deepen pupils' understanding and knowledge, which means that the most able pupils make poor progress and do not reach the high standards that they should.
- Teachers do not focus on the specific needs of pupils who need to catch up, particularly disadvantaged pupils. Teaching assistants do provide effective support for pupils' emotional and behavioural needs. However, the learning support for these pupils is not tailored or sufficient enough to enable them to make acceptable progress with their school work.
- Too often, work in lessons does not have a clear focus on learning. Teachers do not consistently plan activities that develop pupils' understanding and skills over time. This limits pupils' progress.
- Teachers do not provide pupils with clear guidance about how they can improve their work. Too often, pupils repeat mistakes without teachers correcting them.
- Where teaching is less effective, it does not inspire pupils to learn. This leads to some pupils losing interest and going off task, which slows their learning. Pupils do not consistently take care with the presentation of their work because teachers do not



routinely insist on them producing the best work they can.

- The teaching of English and mathematics is not good enough. Staff have received training to improve their subject knowledge and to establish a whole-school approach to teaching in these subjects. However, teachers do not adapt what they do to meet the needs of the pupils in their own classes.
- Teachers do not plan sufficient opportunities for pupils to practise and develop their English and mathematics skills across the curriculum. Work in science, history and geography is low-level, often requiring pupils to draw a picture or to provide short and simple responses to basic questions. As a result, pupils do not develop age-appropriate knowledge and skills in these subjects.
- The teaching of phonics in the early years and key stage 1 ensures that pupils get off to a strong start with their reading and spelling. Adults teach phonics in a systematic way and group pupils carefully so that teaching matches their abilities closely. They model sounds accurately, which supports pupils to develop a secure understanding of the sounds that letters make. Consequently, pupils can use their phonics skills to decode words and to spell.
- There is some effective teaching. Where teaching matches pupils' needs closely, they engage fully in their work and make the progress they should. Teaching and learning in art is strong and there are some high-quality pieces of artwork on display.
- Positive relationships between adults and pupils mean that pupils want to do well. Most pupils listen carefully to teachers' explanations in lessons and follow instructions promptly.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils cooperate well in lessons and listen carefully to the ideas and opinions of others. Pupils understand the values of respect, tolerance and fairness and show these through the positive way in which they interact with one another.
- Staff teach pupils how to keep themselves safe and healthy. As a result, pupils have a secure understanding of how to stay safe in different situations, for example when crossing the road and when playing in or near water. They know the importance of eating healthily and taking regular exercise.
- Pupils say that they feel safe at school and most parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, agree. Pupils are confident that there is an adult they can talk to if they need help.
- Pupils understand the different types of bullying, for example physical, verbal, racial and cyber bullying. They say that bullying rarely happens and that, if it does, adults are quick to respond.
- Pupils value the care and support they receive from staff. They say that one of the strengths of the school is that everyone feels valued and included. Pupils were keen to



tell inspectors that 'we always try to welcome people to our school'.

- Staff support the most vulnerable pupils well. They are sensitive to pupils' individual needs and put in place a range of strategies to help pupils to overcome any emotional or behavioural barriers to learning they might have. Additional adults work effectively with individual pupils to develop their skills and confidence so that they can cope successfully with school life.
- The breakfast club provides pupils with a safe and positive start to the day. This means that they are ready to learn when they arrive in school.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- Over the past three years, pupils' absence has increased and, in 2018, it was above the national average. The proportion of pupils who are frequently absent from school has also risen to above the national average in this time. The attendance of disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND is particularly low and has declined at a faster rate than that of other pupils. Although leaders have taken action to encourage better attendance, they have failed to halt this decline.
- In lessons, pupils listen carefully to adults and to one another, even when teaching does not support their learning as well as it should. Pupils try hard to apply themselves to tasks but too many lose concentration and become disengaged when work is too easy or does not capture their interest.
- Pupils enjoy school and have positive attitudes to learning. They understand school routines and know the difference between right and wrong. Pupils conduct themselves well at breaktimes, lunchtimes and as they move around the school. As a result, the school is a calm, orderly and happy community.
- Pupils are polite, friendly and courteous to one another and to adults. Pupils spoken to during the inspection said that pupils behave well most of the time.
- Support for pupils who have difficulty managing their emotions and behaviour has been effective in reducing the number of behaviour incidents across the school.

Outcomes for pupils

Inadequate

- Over time, pupils underachieve. Current pupils are making poor progress, particularly in writing and mathematics. Learning is not suitably planned to enable pupils to make the progress they should. This is especially so for the most able pupils, disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND.
- Despite an improvement in 2017, pupils' attainment at the end of Year 2 has been below national averages for two out of the past three years. In 2018, pupils' attainment was below national averages in reading, writing and mathematics. Attainment in reading was in the lowest 10% of schools nationally. Consequently, these pupils were poorly prepared for the next stage in their education.
- Current key stage 2 pupils who previously underachieved at the end of key stage 1 have not made the progress needed to catch-up. Therefore, too many pupils are



working below age-related expectations in Years 4, 5 and 6.

- Improvements to pupils' progress in reading and mathematics at the end of Year 6 in 2017 have not been sustained. In 2018, pupils' progress in both subjects declined. In mathematics, it fell to well below the national average. Pupils' average attainment in reading and mathematics over the past three years is in the bottom 10% of schools nationally.
- Pupils' attainment in writing at the end of Year 6 has risen considerably over the past three years and, in 2018, it was in line with the national average. However, work in books shows that current pupils are making poor progress in the development of their writing skills.
- Disadvantaged pupils' progress in writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6 is consistently below that of other pupils nationally. In 2018, it was significantly below. Current disadvantaged pupils are underachieving considerably. In almost all classes and subjects, these pupils make poor progress. The proportion of disadvantaged pupils working at age-related expectations in reading, writing and mathematics is low across the school and there is a significant gap between the attainment of these pupils and their peers.
- The most able pupils make weak progress over time. This is because teaching does not stretch or challenge these pupils' thinking and learning. As a result, very few pupils are currently working at greater depth, particularly in writing and mathematics. With the exception of Year 6 writing in 2018, the proportion of pupils achieving the higher standards at the end of each key stage is consistently below national averages.
- Pupils with SEND do not make the progress they should because they do not receive the academic support that they need. Intervention programmes are not implemented effectively and do not have the positive impact that leaders intend. In lessons, work is not tailored to meet the specific needs of this group of pupils, which limits their progress.
- There is little evidence that pupils develop a depth of understanding in subjects such as science, history and geography. Tasks are too simple and teaching too infrequent to enable pupils to develop secure knowledge and skills over time. Stronger science teaching in Year 6 supports pupils to make better progress in this subject in their final year at the school.
- Over the past two years, the proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check has risen to be in line with national averages.

Early years provision

Good

- Leaders in the early years have a thorough and accurate understanding of what is working well in the provision and what needs to be improved. They make regular checks on the quality of teaching and provide training and support for staff to improve their practice. As a result, teaching is good.
- Children enter Nursery with knowledge and skills that are below those typical for their age. They make strong progress and by the time they move into Reception they are working at a level closer to that of other children nationally. Children who join the



school in Reception also make good progress from their starting points.

- Adults are quick to assess children's individual needs when they start in the early years. They use these assessments to plan additional support to help children who have low starting points to catch up with their peers.
- There is a balance of adult-led and independent activities for children to choose from. Adults ask effective questions to check children's understanding and to move their learning forward. Children have lots of opportunities to practise skills in areas where they are weaker, which supports them to make strong progress.
- Adults plan activities that capture children's interests. As a result, they sustain their concentration well and show good levels of independence. For example, during the inspection, one child was engrossed in making a Christmas decoration while another enthusiastically hunted for treasure in the outdoor area.
- Support for children with SEND is effective. Children with high-level needs benefit from individual support, which ensures that learning is matched closely to their abilities. Leaders work closely with external agencies to ensure that children receive the help that they need. Consequently, these children make good progress from their different starting points.
- Children are happy, friendly and confident. They develop strong personal and social skills, which means that they play and learn well together. Children share and take turns, for example when using the interactive whiteboard and playing in the home corner.
- Children's behaviour is good. This is because adults have consistently high expectations. Children listen carefully and move sensibly around the indoor and outdoor learning environments.
- Adults care for children well. They are positive role models and relationships are strong and nurturing. Adults ensure that children are safe. All of the statutory welfare requirements are met.
- Leaders work actively to involve parents in their children's learning. Parents have frequent opportunities to contribute to assessments and can readily access information about their children's learning and progress online. Leaders also give parents resources so that they can support their children's learning at home.
- Adults know individual children well and have a secure understanding of their next steps in learning. However, systems for recording children's learning and progress over time lack precision.
- At times, activities do not challenge the most able children enough. This means that these children do not achieve as well as they could across the year.



School details

Unique reference number	140183
Local authority	Herefordshire
Inspection number	10058486

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	251
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	John Clark
Headteacher	Pippa Lloyd
Telephone number	01432 268400
Website	www.st-thomascantilupe.org
Email address	admin@st-thomascantilupe.hereford.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	9–10 November 2016

Information about this school

- St Thomas Cantilupe CofE Academy is an average-sized primary school.
- The school is part of the Bishop Anthony Educational Trust and is governed by the board of trustees. There is a local governing body that has delegated responsibility for key aspects of the school's work, for example standards, the curriculum and the use of additional funding.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is in line with the national average.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is in line with the national average. The number of pupils with education, health and care plans is above the national average.
- There is one class in each year group from Nursery to Year 6, except in Year 3, where there are two classes.
- The school's most recent section 48 inspection for schools with a religious character took place in October 2017.
- The school provides a breakfast club and an after-school club for pupils.



Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed pupils' learning in parts of 26 lessons. Four of these observations were undertaken jointly with the headteacher. One inspector visited the breakfast club.
- An inspector listened to a group of pupils read and talked to them about their reading.
- Inspectors scrutinised the quality of work in children's learning journals and pupils' English and mathematics books jointly with senior leaders. Inspectors also examined work in pupils' topic and science books.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and at breaktimes and lunchtimes. They spoke to pupils in lessons and around the school as well as meeting more formally with two groups of pupils from across the school.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher, deputy headteacher and other school leaders. An inspector met with a group of staff to gather their views on safeguarding, professional development, school improvement and pupils' learning. Inspectors also considered the 14 responses to Ofsted's online staff questionnaire.
- The lead inspector met with the chair of the local governing body and one governor. She held discussions with the chief executive of the Bishop Anthony Educational Trust and the trust's academy effectiveness officer.
- Inspectors reviewed a wide range of documentation, including the school's action plans, information about current pupils' achievement, records of checks made on the quality of teaching, records relating to safeguarding and attendance, minutes of meetings of the local governing body and the board of trustees and information on the school's website.
- Inspectors took into consideration the 18 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and two further communications from parents. Two inspectors spoke to parents at the beginning of the school day.

Inspection team

Claire Jones, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Gareth Morgan	Ofsted Inspector
Michael Onyon	Ofsted Inspector



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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.

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