

# Cage Green Primary School

Cage Green Road, Tonbridge, Kent TN10 4PT

## Inspection dates

30–31 January 2019

Overall effectiveness	Inadequate
Effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>Inadequate</b>
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Outcomes for pupils	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Early years provision	<b>Good</b>
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 weaknesses in the school's performance identified at the time of the previous inspection urgently enough or fully enough.
- Inconsistencies in the quality of teaching have caused variations in pupils' progress in English, mathematics and other subjects.
- Some groups of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and the most able, achieve less well than they should.
- Weaknesses in monitoring the use of pupil premium funding as well as variations in the quality of teaching have an adverse impact on disadvantaged pupils' achievement.
- Procedures for monitoring the quality of teaching lack sufficient rigour to ensure that improvements are secure.
- Teachers' expectations of pupils' behaviour are not consistently high enough. As a result, pupils' behaviour varies and is not as good as it should be.
- Inaccuracies in assessments mean that leaders do not have a sufficiently clear view of pupils' progress. Expectations of pupils' outcomes are too low, and school development planning lacks clarity as to what leaders are aiming for.
- Middle leaders' roles in supporting improvements in the school are at an early stage of development.
- The governing body does not support and challenge school leaders effectively.
- Some pupils do not attend school regularly enough to achieve well.

### The school has the following strengths

- Pupils are polite, friendly and keen to learn.
- Pupils who attend The Phoenix Centre make consistently strong progress.
- Effective teaching and strong leadership in early years ensure that children achieve well during Reception Year.
- Recent developments in the teaching of phonics are strengthening pupils' reading skills.
- The school's broad and interesting curriculum contributes well to pupils' enjoyment of school.
- Most parents and carers express confidence in the school.
- Rigorous safeguarding procedures ensure that pupils are safe and secure.

## Full report

In accordance with section 44(2) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than it might in all the circumstances reasonably be expected to perform.

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

- Improve leadership and management by:
  - ensuring that teachers' assessments of pupils' learning are accurate and reliable
  - increasing the rigour of procedures to monitor the quality of teaching and learning
  - ensuring greater clarity in school development planning
  - instilling a sense of urgency about securing the necessary improvements in the school's work
  - developing middle leaders' roles in improving the quality of teaching and learning
  - ensuring that leaders, governors and staff all demonstrate the highest expectations of all pupils' learning and behaviour
  - making sure that the use of pupil premium funding is monitored rigorously so that disadvantaged pupils benefit from consistently effective support
  - improving the governing body's understanding of the school's work, so that it can hold leaders to account more effectively for pupils' outcomes.
- Make sure that all groups of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and the most able, make strong progress and achieve consistently well by ensuring that:
  - teaching supports pupils' needs effectively and builds consistently well on their prior learning
  - teachers have consistently high expectations of pupils' learning and behaviour
  - teachers assess pupils' learning confidently and accurately during lessons and over time.
- Improve pupils' attendance and decrease rates of persistent absenteeism.

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 pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

### Inadequate

- Leaders have not secured the necessary improvements in the school's work that were identified at the time of the previous inspection. As a result, some groups of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, continue to achieve less well than they should.
- Inaccuracies in teachers' assessments of pupils' learning give an unreliable view of the quality of teaching and learning across the school. As a result, leaders and governors are unclear about how well different groups of pupils are progressing and their plans for developments lack clarity about what they are aiming for.
- Leaders have not used pupil premium funds well enough to support disadvantaged pupils' achievement. Until very recently, leaders were unaware of the need to compare disadvantaged pupils' outcomes with those of other pupils nationally in order to set sufficiently high achievement targets.
- Middle leaders are knowledgeable about the subjects for which they are responsible and keen to develop their leadership skills. However, they are not clear enough about how to do this.
- The local authority has provided insufficient support for the school since the previous inspection. As a result, leaders have not developed the skills necessary to secure sustained improvements in the school's performance.
- Leaders use sports premium appropriately to engage pupils in a wide range of sports activities. Pupils enjoy physical education lessons, and the proportion participating in events and competitions has increased since the previous inspection.
- Leaders and governors have secured a number of improvements in the school's work since the previous inspection. For example, progress and standards in writing have improved during the past year and the curriculum has been extended to make learning more engaging.
- Teachers and other staff work well together. Parents say that leaders and teaching staff are approachable and caring.
- Pupils have opportunities to develop knowledge and skills in a wide range of subjects and to demonstrate their creativity through the arts. The school's broad curriculum, including special events such as 'India day' and 'space day', contributes well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The school promotes British values well through a range of activities. For example, thought-provoking assemblies and events such as elections for head boy and head girl provide pupils with regular opportunities to consider values such as democracy and mutual respect.
- Leaders use special needs funding effectively. As a result, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) make good progress.
- The effective leadership and expertise in the Phoenix Centre ensure that pupils who attend the centre make consistently strong progress, both academically and personally.

## Governance of the school

- Governors have been too slow to challenge leaders and to hold them to account for the school's performance since the previous inspection. They have not used published information about pupils' outcomes well enough to compare the school's performance with that of other schools nationally and to identify weaknesses.
- Governors are not clear enough about the difference teaching is making to pupils' progress and well-being. They are too willing to accept and excuse weaknesses in pupils' outcomes, including for disadvantaged pupils.
- Governors are keen to develop their role in the school's leadership. For example, they have very recently worked with a local authority representative to review the school's performance in relation to national averages. As a result, they are beginning to develop a clearer view of strengths and weaknesses in the school's work.
- The governing body oversees its statutory responsibilities for pupils' safety well and makes sure that all safeguarding requirements are fully in place.

## Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders give pupils' safety an appropriately high priority. The designated safeguarding leads are knowledgeable about safeguarding issues and are well supported by the school's pastoral team.
- Leaders make sure that staff recruitment checks are completed promptly and fully. Robust procedures for reporting, recording and managing safeguarding concerns ensure that records are up to date.
- Regular, good-quality training ensures that staff and governors are well informed about safeguarding procedures and clear about their responsibilities for pupils' safety and well-being.
- Leaders act quickly if they have any concerns about pupils' safety. They work constructively with parents and maintain valuable links with agencies such as children's services. The family liaison officer plays a key role in helping parents to access specialist support wherever available.
- Strong relationships throughout the school ensure that pupils are happy to talk to an adult about any worries they may have. Parents feel that the school takes their views into account and say that any concerns are resolved promptly.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

## Requires improvement

- Teaching does not ensure sufficiently strong progress for all groups of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and the most able. Variations in the quality of teaching mean that the quality of learning in English, mathematics and other subjects is uneven across the school.
- Inaccuracies in assessments of pupils' progress and inconsistencies in teachers' subject knowledge hinder pupils' learning. Some teachers are unclear about pupils' needs and unsure about how to move pupils' learning forward.

- Teachers do not always use questioning sufficiently well during lessons to explore and extend pupils' understanding. Sometimes pupils' learning is hampered because misconceptions are not picked up and addressed quickly enough by teachers.
- Teachers' expectations of pupils' learning vary between classes. In some classes, low expectations mean that teaching fails to challenge and extend pupils' understanding fully enough, including for disadvantaged pupils and for the most able.
- Recent improvements in the teaching of phonics ensure that the youngest pupils develop increasingly secure reading skills.
- Developments in the teaching of writing during the past year mean that pupils make better progress in this subject than in reading and mathematics.
- Pupils make strong progress in those classes where teaching is effective. Where this is the case, high expectations for pupils' learning and behaviour and good use of assessment information ensure that teaching supports and extends pupils' learning well, including for the most able pupils. However, these notable strengths in teaching are not distributed widely enough, or established sufficiently well, across the school.
- Effective teaching and expertise in The Phoenix Centre ensure that those pupils who attend learn well, both academically and personally. The Phoenix Centre staff work closely and constructively with teachers and teaching assistants in the mainstream classes. As a result, pupils benefit from consistently good-quality support for their specific individual needs.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Requires improvement**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- The school is committed to providing good-quality care for every pupil. The school's success is reflected in the strong progress pupils make in their personal, social and emotional development.
- Most parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, are confident that their children are safe in school. One commented, 'There is a strong feeling of care throughout the school ... the children's well-being is clearly paramount', a view reflected by many parents.
- Pupils want to do well. They work carefully and neatly in their books. Pupils who spoke with inspectors during the inspection spoke enthusiastically about school, and parents say that their children thoroughly enjoy school life.
- Pupils know who to speak to if they are worried and understand some of the actions they can take to help keep themselves safe, including when using the internet.
- Pupils know that steps taken by the school, such as regular fire drills and the school's provision of qualified first aiders, help to keep them safe.
- Pupils say that their teachers encourage them to care for others. They say that bullying is rare, a view confirmed by discussions with leaders and by the school's behaviour records.

- Most pupils demonstrate positive attitudes to learning and work hard. However, some pupils lose focus and disengage during lessons.

## Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- Pupils' attendance has been consistently lower than the national average since the previous inspection, with little sign of sustained improvement.
- Rates of persistent absenteeism are continually higher than the national average and increased in 2018.
- Teachers' expectations of pupils' behaviour vary between classes. Some teachers set clear guidelines for pupils' behaviour and insist that pupils behave well. Where this is the case, pupils' good behaviour makes a strong contribution to their learning. However, in some cases, teachers do not respond well enough to off-task behaviour, and pupils learn less well as a result.

## Outcomes for pupils

## Requires improvement

- The quality of pupils' learning varies between year groups and subjects. As a result, pupils do not achieve as well as they should in English, mathematics and other subjects.
- Ongoing variations in the quality of teaching since the previous inspection have led to persistently weak outcomes for pupils at the end of both key stage 1 and key stage 2. In 2018, standards were below the national average in writing at the end of key stage 1, in reading at the end of key stage 2 and in mathematics at the end of both key stages.
- Inconsistencies in the quality of teaching mean that the most able pupils do not achieve well enough, particularly in reading and mathematics.
- Disadvantaged pupils' progress mirrors that of other pupils in the school, varying between year groups, classes and subjects. In 2018, disadvantaged pupils made weaker progress in reading and mathematics during key stage 2 than other pupils nationally. However, they made stronger progress in writing.
- The results of the Year 1 phonics check have been consistently lower than the national average since the previous inspection. However, recent developments in the teaching of phonics have strengthened pupils' reading skills.
- During the inspection, pupils in early years and key stage 1 used phonics skills confidently and successfully to read unfamiliar words, suggesting that recent improvements in the teaching of phonics are increasingly well established. However, it is too soon for improvements in teaching to have impacted fully on pupils' reading outcomes across all year groups.
- Pupils' progress in writing has improved during the past year. They develop a consistently legible and fluent handwriting style, which contributes well to the quality of their written work.
- Pupils with SEND who have an education, health and care plan, including those who attend The Phoenix Centre, make stronger progress than other pupils in the school.

This is due to effective specialist teaching in The Phoenix Centre and the successful way in which the centre staff support pupils in the mainstream classes.

## Early years provision

**Good**

- Effective teaching ensures that children make strong progress. Children develop secure reading, writing and numeracy skills by the end of Reception Year and are well prepared for the next stage of their learning in Year 1.
- The proportion of children achieving a good level of development has consistently matched national averages since the previous inspection. In 2018, it was higher than the national average.
- Adults have established a calm, positive and purposeful atmosphere throughout early years. Consistently high expectations and well-established routines help children to settle into school life quickly.
- Adults provide strong, caring role models for children. They speak to children quietly and respectfully so that children feel valued, comfortable and secure. As a result, children rapidly grow in confidence. They are keen to learn, enjoy playing and learning with their friends and behave well.
- Adults make good use of books to capture children's interest and to develop early reading skills. For example, during the inspection, children joined in a discussion with the teacher about 'The Gingerbread Man', talking happily about some of the characters and about what had happened in the story.
- Children learn how to use a range of practical resources to complete mathematical activities successfully. For example, during the inspection children chose to use counters, number lines or pegs to count to 20 and to add two numbers together.
- The early years leader has a clear and accurate understanding of the quality of teaching and learning in early years. She identifies priorities for improvement appropriately and makes suitable arrangements to support developments in teaching, including carefully considered coaching and training.
- Positive and constructive links with parents ensure that they know how well their children are learning. Events such as parents' workshops provide parents with good-quality information about children's learning and with ideas to help them to support their children at home. Parents are pleased with their children's progress and feel that adults look after their children well.
- Variations in adults' use of questioning mean that children do not always learn as well as they should. Some adults use questioning very well to explore children's understanding and to engage them in learning. However, in some cases, questioning does not extend children's learning fully enough. Leaders have appropriate plans in place to improve this aspect of teaching.

## School details

Unique reference number	118574
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10058131

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	369
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mark Weiner
Headteacher	Graeme Garthwaite
Telephone number	01732 354325
Website	<a href="http://www.cage-green.kent.sch.uk">www.cage-green.kent.sch.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:headteacher@cage-green.kent.sch.uk">headteacher@cage-green.kent.sch.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	4 October 2016

## Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils who are supported by the pupil premium is higher than the national average.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is above the national average.
- Most pupils are White British. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is below the national average.
- The school has a breakfast club and an after-school club. Both clubs are operated by private providers and were not included in this inspection.
- The school has a specialist resource centre, called The Phoenix Centre, for pupils who have autism spectrum disorder. Pupils are timetabled to spend some of the time in the centre and some of the time in mainstream classes, according to their individual needs. There are 30 pupils between the ages of five and 11 currently on roll in the centre.



## Information about this inspection

- The inspection team visited all classes, including those in The Phoenix Centre, with a senior leader.
- Inspectors held discussions with the headteacher, senior leaders, middle leaders and a local authority representative. Inspectors also met with five governors, including the chair of the governing body.
- The inspection team took account of 118 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including 85 free-text comments, as well as the views expressed by parents informally during the school day. Inspectors also considered 23 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and considered a range of documents, including safeguarding policies, the school's improvement plan and information about pupils' progress and attendance.
- The inspection team looked at a sample of pupils' work provided by the school, as well as looking at pupils' work in lessons. Inspectors listened to pupils in Years 2 and 6 reading.

## Inspection team

Julie Sackett, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Andrew Hogarth	Ofsted Inspector
Clementina Aina	Ofsted Inspector

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