

Eastchurch Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Warden Road, Eastchurch, Sheppey, ME12 4EJ

Inspection dates 1–2 May 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because:

- Progress has not been consistently strong across the school.
- Teaching is not always pitched at the right level for pupils and as a result the proportion of pupils making the progress of which they are capable varies between year groups.
- Some teachers do not check on pupils' progress regularly enough during lessons so that the pace of learning dips.
- The school is now improving but the pace of change has been restricted by the move mid-term from one site to two school sites.
- In some lessons teachers do not make it clear to pupils the purpose of their learning or enable them to tell whether they have been successful.
- When responding to marking, not all pupils understand what they should do so that their learning improves.

The school has the following strengths

- Eastchurch is a happy school. Relationships throughout the school are extremely positive.
- Leaders, including governors, want the school to improve and are ambitious for all pupils to fulfil their potential and have equal opportunities to succeed.
- A large majority of parents and carers who responded to Parent View agree that the school is well led and managed.
- Senior leaders take a strong lead in driving change; staff have a clear understanding of what they need to do to improve the quality of teaching in order to raise pupils' achievement.
- Pupils are very caring towards each other and to all adults. They help each other to make the right choices for behaviour. They fully understand what bullying is and that it is not acceptable.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching in all classes in each school. They visited 20 lessons of which three were joint observations made with the two heads of school. In addition inspectors made a number of short visits to lessons and assemblies.
- They held meetings with leaders and managers, staff and pupils, members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors met informally with parents and carers at the beginning of the school day and took account of the 33 responses to the online Parent View survey.
- They observed the school’s work and looked at a number of documents, including the school’s information about pupils’ progress, the self-evaluation summary, the development plan, the local authority reports, minutes of the governing body, records relating to behaviour and attendance, and safeguarding documents.
- The inspectors analysed 32 questionnaires from staff.

Inspection team

Gay Whent, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Clive Reynolds

Additional Inspector

Vanessa Tomlinson

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Eastchurch Church of England Primary School is one school on two sites: All Saints and St Clement.
- The school is led by an executive headteacher and one governing body. Each site additionally has its own head of school.
- This is an above average-sized primary school.
- The school has been subject to reorganisation from a first school by the local authority and from September 2010 had pupils in Year 6 for the first time.
- St Clement School was opened in November 2011 at Leysdown-on-Sea. There has been a period of high turbulence.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in a Nursery and a Reception class at All Saints and in a Reception class at St Clement.
- The school takes on board an additional number of pupils each year from the local authority.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported at school action is above the national average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above national average. These pupils have a variety of barriers to learning, including behavioural, social, physical and emotional needs and specific learning difficulties.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium (extra government funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, looked after children and children of service families) is above national average. There are currently no children of service families.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school has achieved Eco School status.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and accelerate rates of progress so that more pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2 meet or exceed expected levels by ensuring that teachers:
 - always pitch work more precisely to the learning needs of all pupils, including greater challenge for more-able pupils, providing opportunities for them to use and apply their skills
 - apply the school's marking policy consistently and plan for pupils to have enough time to respond to teachers' comments in their books so that they know how to improve their work and gaps in learning are addressed
 - set 'next steps' for learning for each pupil, closely matched to their needs and abilities so that they know and understand what they are expected to achieve in relation to their learning objective.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Pupils' achievement requires improvement because progress has not been consistently strong across the school. Pupils made the lowest progress in Key Stage 2 in 2012 where there were significant pockets of underachievement, especially in English.
- Children join early years classes with knowledge and skills that are well below expectations for their age. As a result of teaching that is good or better they develop personal, social and emotional skills which enable them to settle into school quickly and start to benefit from all that school offers. They make good progress, however they are still below average at the beginning of Year 1.
- Pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is below the national average by the end of Year 2. Fewer pupils are working at the higher levels in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 2 because teaching is not always pitched at the right level for pupils.
- The teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters make) has been improving since a focused whole-school initiative for improvement was put in place in September. As a result, pupils are making much faster progress than in the past in their reading because they confidently use their knowledge of letters and sounds to read words they cannot recognise.
- By the end of Year 6 attainment is now improving at a faster rate than nationally so that almost all pupils are making average progress in their reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils who benefit from the pupil premium are making good progress overall as their needs are accurately identified and a range of effective strategies have been put into place to improve their learning. The funding has been used to purchase support from specialist teachers as well as matched intervention programmes led by skilled teaching assistants. All groups of pupils who benefit from the pupil premium reach similar levels of attainment to other pupils in the school in both English and mathematics as measured by their average points scores at the end of Key Stage 2.
- Some of the disabled pupils and those with special educational needs have made good or better progress in English and mathematics which is leading to higher attainment. This is as a result of the training opportunities given to both teachers and their support staff, particularly in relation to developing not only pupils' speech, language and communication but also good behaviour. Adults are skilful in setting pupils small, achievable targets to give them confidence and a sense of achievement.
- More-able pupils are competent readers and enjoy reading books by Michael Morpurgo and J K Rowling which they say they 'cannot put down'. In some classes, the least able struggle to understand more complex words without a great deal of additional support.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching is not yet consistently good across the school and this variability has resulted in some pupils underachieving in the past. The quality of teaching seen during the inspection varied from requiring improvement to outstanding. A large majority of teaching is now good or better as a result of a constant drive for improvement with support and training in place.
- Marking is detailed and thorough. The school is developing the opportunities for all pupils to respond and improve their work. Leaders have recognised that not all comments are developmental and this is not yet consistent across the school. Teachers do not always clarify some pupils' misunderstandings so that gaps in learning are not always as quickly addressed as they could be.
- Where teaching is good, written comments show pupils how to improve their work. An example was when a more able boy in Year 6 wrote, 'Meanwhile I was filled with overwhelming astonishment as the earth's twin sister, Venus, twirled like an angel falling from the sky', as a result of clear improvement feedback.

- Where teachers do not have a clear understanding of pupils' abilities, some groups of pupils do not make good enough progress and their progress slows. When some older pupils have the chance to set their own targets they do not always set them in line with their learning ability, for example, the target of 'I need to reduce the use of 'and' in my writing' is not precisely matched to a higher level of writing.
- Teachers use learning objectives so that pupils are aware of the lesson focus. They all now need to explain clearly to pupils of all abilities what they have to do and how they will achieve the objective.
- Teaching assistants have a key role to play. They are well trained. Teachers and teaching assistants work well together. Teaching assistants play a full part in lessons, often taking responsibility for the learning of small groups. Appropriately targeted support and intervention are ensuring that most pupils' individual needs are now met well.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- This is a happy school. Pupils are friendly, enthusiastic learners. They can think of very few aspects of the school they wish to improve other than to speed up the broadband or add some new resources.
- The school is open from 8.30am when pupils can go into their classes. In many classes, teachers encourage pupils to use this time to read through their marking comments and in classes where learning is good, pupils respond to teachers' questions.
- Pupils say that behaviour is nearly always good all of the time and why. One pupil stated: 'I have to be honest – I had atrocious behaviour when I joined the school' and explained how the encouraging support from the school's specialist teacher enabled him to behave well. Others say that the school will go out of its way to support pupils with other needs, linking with outside specialists. Pupils help each other to learn how to behave well and this, they believe, is why behaviour is so good.
- Pupils behave sensibly at all times when moving around the school or in the dining hall and show exemplary behaviour when in assembly. At both playtime and lunchtime pupils play well together and are often engaged in playing games led by adults. Fostering good relationships is an important focus for the school. Almost all parents and carers agree with this.
- The school's curriculum is rich and interesting and engages pupils' interests. It is used to promote e-safety through teaching pupils how to stay safe when using the internet.
- Pupils unanimously agree that if there was any case of bullying it would be dealt with immediately. They trust all adults in the school and would go to any if they needed help.
- Behaviour is not yet outstanding because where teachers do not always pitch work precisely to pupils' needs some pupils lose their concentration and their attention waivers.
- While attendance rates are still slightly lower than average, they are increasing year on year. The school does its utmost to reduce absence with a wide range of promotions such as certificates and rewards for good attendance.

The leadership and management are good

- The school has a strong senior leadership team which is working well together to raise pupils' achievement. This is already showing in greater improvements in progress in each year group.
- The school's self-evaluation accurately focuses on improving the quality of teaching and increasing outcomes for pupils.
- The headteacher and her senior leaders have strengthened the way in which teachers are appraised for their performance. Checking the quality of teaching is accurate and thorough, focusing on improving pupils' outcomes. Professional development linked to learning needs is

planned in relation to teachers' needs.

- Pupils' progress across the school is checked regularly and methodically in order to meet their learning needs ever more precisely. The school has a wealth of data which are analysed and shared with teachers so that they are fully involved in six termly progress meetings across the year.
 - The use of additional pupil premium funding is reported to parents and carers through the school's website which shows how the money has improved outcomes for pupils.
 - Leaders are determined to ensure that all pupils fulfil their potential, that they have equal opportunities to prosper and that there is no discrimination.
 - The local authority has provided a very appropriate level of support for the school's focus on improvement by outlining clear next steps guidance.
 - The way that subjects are organised is rich and interesting and includes a range of themes for pupils to explore including significant aspects of the decades since the 1940s. Pupils are encouraged to carry out their own research which is linked to home learning opportunities. For example, pupils in Year 5 confidently presented an assembly on what they had learnt, in words, dance, song and costume to their families.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors challenge the school and regularly ask questions in order to clarify their understanding. They are fully aware of why pupils have underperformed in the past and have compared this to all schools nationally using the current information available. Governors have a good understanding of the school's areas for improvement through their links with development planning and their visits. They know that performance management is in place. They understand how it works and that underperformance has been dealt with rigorously. They are also aware of how the school's leaders are supporting those whose teaching requires improvement. Governors have undertaken training in order to develop their roles as well as possible. They have a wide range of skills and backgrounds and together make an effective team. The school's finances are effectively monitored and managed. Governors are aware of how the pupil premium is spent and ensure that it is correctly targeted at benefiting the learning of those pupils in receipt of the funding. They are aware that this is to narrow the gap between those pupils and their peers. Governors meet their statutory responsibilities, including those for safeguarding.
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What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	118644
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	411916
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	449
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ian Goodwin
Headteacher	Pauline Shipley
Date of previous school inspection	23–24 March 2010
Telephone number	01795 880279
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