

St Peter's Church of England Primary School

The Durlocks, Folkestone, Kent CT19 6AL

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| Inspection dates | 18–19 November 2015 |
| Overall effectiveness | Good |
| Effectiveness of leadership and management | Good |
| Quality of teaching, learning and assessment | Good |
| Personal development, behaviour and welfare | Good |
| Outcomes for pupils | Good |
| Early years provision | Good |
| Overall effectiveness at previous inspection | Requires improvement |

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- St Peter's is a welcoming, friendly and hardworking place for pupils to learn and play in.
- The headteacher provides strong leadership. She is well supported by other leaders, governors and all members of staff.
- Teaching, including the use of assessment, has improved substantially since the previous inspection and is consistently good. As a result, pupils' progress has quickened across the school.
- Pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils achieve levels of attainment which are in line with national averages at the end of Year 6. They are well prepared with the academic and personal skills needed for the next stage of their education.
- The teaching of phonics (the sounds letters make) is particularly effective, giving pupils a secure grounding in the basic skills needed to read and write confidently.
- Pupil premium funding is used effectively to ensure disadvantaged pupils achieve well.
- Children make good progress during early years because teaching is effective. Positive relationships ensure children feel settled and secure.
- The role governors play in the school's development has improved dramatically. They provide good levels of support and challenge for leaders.
- Leaders use primary sports funding well to inspire pupils to participate in activities and to develop their fitness.
- Pupils are polite and well behaved. Robust safeguarding arrangements ensure they are safe.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Recent revisions to the curriculum are not yet fully established.
- Disadvantaged pupils' attendance is slightly lower than that of other pupils in the school.
- Pupils do not always present their work neatly and the quality of their handwriting is variable.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Embed recent revisions to the curriculum and ensure full and appropriate coverage of all subjects.
- Make sure that disadvantaged pupils arrive in school punctually and attend as regularly as their peers.
- Ensure pupils' handwriting is consistent and legible and that they always present their work with care.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- The headteacher has led the school tirelessly and with dedication through a period of rapid change, securing substantial improvements in pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching. She is very well supported by an effective team of leaders, governors and staff.
- The positive, upbeat atmosphere of the school and the good-quality teaching and learning evident across all year groups are indicative of the significant improvements made to all aspects of the school's work since the previous inspection.
- Leaders have increased their expectations of pupils, ensuring that all have equal opportunities to achieve well and to enjoy their time in school. Leaders and teachers complete frequent and accurate assessments of pupils' learning. They regularly discuss pupils' progress together, carefully considering the needs of any pupils who make slower progress and quickly providing extra help.
- Subject leaders make an enthusiastic and effective contribution to the school's development. They share the headteacher's commitment to ensuring the best for all pupils and are clear about the next steps in the school's journey.
- The reading manager provides strong leadership for phonics teaching. She has played a central role in raising pupils' achievement in reading and phonics. She is knowledgeable and passionate about her subject and shares this expertise very well with her colleagues through training and advice.
- Leaders use robust systems for managing teachers' performance and securing improvements. They provide good-quality training which effectively builds teachers' expertise and improves their practice as seen, for example, in the teaching of phonics.
- Primary sports funding is used well because it is tailored to the school's particular needs. For example, sessions in the local sports centre have extended pupils' experiences and motivated them to participate in sport. The school participates in more competitions in the locality than previously and children in early years benefit from yoga sessions. Training for staff has increased their confidence in teaching physical education.
- Pupils regularly discuss and learn about British values. For example, leaders often talk about values such as kindness and tolerance during worship times. Events such as the recent Remembrance Day commemorations remind pupils of Britain's history and of the importance of respect for and understanding of people from different cultures and backgrounds.
- Leaders promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Pupils learn about a range of religions, including Hinduism, Judaism and Islam, as well as Christianity, and respect the fact that people have differing beliefs. Pupils are confident about asking questions during class discussions about moral issues and are compassionate when considering the needs of others. For example, during the inspection, pupils in Year 1 empathised well with pictures of children, suggesting about one picture, 'he's sad because he doesn't have a home'. Such thoughtful and positive attitudes indicate the school's success in preparing pupils for life in modern Britain.
- Leaders recently reviewed and updated the curriculum to give pupils opportunities to explore topics and subjects in greater depth than previously. The new curriculum design has enthused teachers, giving them more choices about how to teach different subjects. However, it is too soon for leaders to have established developments fully. Leaders continue to check that all required aspects of learning are covered during the course of the year and that there are no gaps.
- Pupils are given many opportunities to develop their creative potential, with art given a high priority. For example, the school's recent presentation of performance poetry at a nearby theatre was very much enjoyed by pupils and staff alike, with many parents attending.
- Pupil premium funding is used effectively to ensure disadvantaged pupils achieve well. For example, it is used to deliver booster sessions for pupils in English and mathematics, to employ a family and pupil support officer to advise families and to fund a school counsellor. The school's success is evident in the good progress made by disadvantaged pupils and the narrowing gap in attainment between this group and others pupils nationally.
- Leaders, governors and teachers work well with parents, most of whom are pleased with the progress their children are making.

■ The governance of the school

- The governing body's role has developed very well since the previous inspection and subsequent review of its work. Governors speak knowledgeably about pupils' achievement, including different groups, and the quality of teaching. They use a range of tools, including nationally published achievement information, to check the school's performance and to compare it with other schools nationally. They know how leaders use pupil premium funding to ensure disadvantaged pupils make the same good progress as their classmates.
- The Chair of the Governing Body and vice-chair meet with the headteacher regularly, whilst all governors routinely visit lessons and events. This ensures they are up to date about the school's work. As one governor commented, 'We see the daily rhythm of the school and the impact of actions'. The governing body has put effective procedures in place to support new governors, such as allocating them a mentor governor so that they quickly learn their roles and responsibilities. They make sure that all governors are fully involved in reviewing the school's work and in holding leaders to account. Governors have improved links with parents. For example, they make sure that parents know who the governors are and how to contact them if needed.
- Governors speak knowledgeably about how leaders use funds to boost pupils' achievement. They know, for example, that weekly sessions at the local sports centre are popular with pupils and parents and have visited for themselves to see the impact this is having on pupils' stamina and fitness.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Staff and governors are well qualified in safeguarding procedures. The headteacher regularly reports any issues to the governing body as appropriate. The school site is secure and well maintained. Staff supervise pupils appropriately during playtimes, lunchtimes and at other times in the school day. Procedures in case of concern are clear and widely available through the school website, office and policies.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

- The quality of teaching is much better than at the time of the previous inspection. Teaching is confident, lively and engaging. Teachers have higher expectations of pupils' work, including the most-able, and set challenging, interesting tasks for pupils of all abilities.
- The teaching of phonics is a particular strength in the school. Phonics skills are taught consistently and effectively throughout the school, giving pupils a firm grasp of basic reading and writing skills.
- Teachers use good-quality texts very well to capture pupils' interest in reading. For example, during the inspection, the older pupils enthused about the class book, *There's a Boy in the Girls' Bathroom*, going on to contribute to a lively discussion about the plot. Teachers use regular visits to the local library and incentives, such as the school's 'Red Ted' awards, to successfully encourage pupils to read often.
- Adults in all classes provide good role models for pupils to copy. For example, they make sure they speak clearly and demonstrate effective social skills. This contributes well to the development of pupils' language and personal skills.
- The way teachers use marking to help pupils to improve their work has improved substantially since the previous inspection. Marking is consistently in line with the school's policy and gives pupils specific advice about what they need to do next to move their learning forward. Pupils have regular opportunities to read and respond to teachers' comments.
- While teachers have high expectations of almost all aspects of pupils' work, occasionally they miss opportunities to insist that pupils write neatly and present their work tidily.
- Teaching assistants are well qualified and play a valuable role in pupils' learning. They provide confident support which suits pupils' individual needs very well, including those who need more help with their learning.
- Teachers give pupils lively, interesting activities to complete in English lessons, which inspire them to write well. They are alert to pupils' needs, quickly picking up on any who are finding the work more difficult and giving them extra help so that they keep up with their classmates.
- Teachers and teaching assistants use good-quality practical equipment well to help pupils to learn mathematical skills. They teach them different ways of solving mathematical problems so that pupils tackle tasks confidently.
- All parents who completed the online questionnaire, Parent View, consider pupils to be taught well.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

is good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Pupils say they like school and talk enthusiastically about their learning. They are keen to do well and try hard.
- Pupils enjoy physical education lessons and know how these help them to stay fit. They enthuse about their weekly activity sessions at a local sports centre, saying that they like trying new sports such as fencing and archery.
- Relationships in the school are good. Pupils get on well together and are respectful towards adults. Most parents who completed the online questionnaire, Parent View, feel that children are safe, happy and well looked after.
- The breakfast club provides those who attend with a comfortable, safe and relaxed occasion to start their school day. Pupils enjoy a wide range of hot and cold breakfast options. For example, during the inspection, they happily tucked into baked beans, eggs and toast while chatting to friends. This helped to set them up well for the school day ahead.
- Pupils feel very safe. They say pupils are kind to each other, with comments including, 'We're one big family – teachers always look after us'. Pupils know the part they can play in ensuring their own safety, including when using the internet. Regular events contribute well to their growing sense of personal responsibility. For example, during the inspection, the older pupils worked positively with a cycling coach to learn more about how to use their bicycles safely on the road.
- Pupils know about different types of bullying, such as racism and cyber-bullying, and say it hardly ever happens in school. They know what to do if they have a problem and feel well supported by adults.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Clear rules and well-established routines ensure most pupils behave well in lessons and when moving round the school. All parents who completed the online questionnaire, Parent View, consider pupils to be well behaved.
- Pupils enjoy playing with the equipment provided during playtimes, such as the skipping ropes, and do so safely and sensibly.
- Most pupils attend regularly and arrive on time at the start of the school day. Attendance rates have improved since the previous inspection and have been in line with the national average for the past two years. Rates of persistent absenteeism have steadily reduced as attendance has improved. Information about pupils' current attendance indicates that improvements have been maintained.
- Attendance rates for disadvantaged pupils are slightly lower than those for other groups in the school. Occasionally a few arrive late in the mornings, which delays the start of their learning a little.

Outcomes for pupils

are good

- A dip in pupils' overall attainment at the end of both key stages was reversed in 2015 so that pupils attained in line with the national average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6.
- Pupils make good progress in reading. Pupils say they like reading and enjoy receiving the school's 'Red Ted' awards for reading regularly. They use a variety of techniques, including phonics, to read very successfully. This gives them the confidence to read a wide range of books, undaunted by more challenging texts. They regularly explore and discuss class books, making perceptive comments about characters and plot. For example, during the inspection, older pupils made sensible suggestions about the meaning of vocabulary, suggesting that the 'essence' of the story may refer to the 'soul' or 'flavour' of the book.
- Pupils' phonics skills have improved substantially since the previous inspection, contributing to better standards in reading and writing. Pupils quickly become confident in using strategies to read. For example, during the inspection a child in Reception Year happily showed his neighbour an 'e' he had spotted in the words they were reading. Children work hard in phonics sessions, confidently reading and building words. The results of the Year 1 phonics check have improved substantially, with success rates doubling since the previous inspection. The results were average in 2014 with a further marked increase in 2015. Disadvantaged pupils' results have also increased, in line with their classmates, and were much higher than average in 2015.

- Published information about pupils' achievement is unduly affected by the relatively small numbers of pupils in each year group. For example, in 2015, attainment in reading was below average at the end of Key Stage 1 because a few pupils did not achieve expected levels. However, while these pupils took a little longer to secure basic reading skills, school information indicates that they made good progress from their starting points. Pupils' attainment in reading at the end of Key Stage 2 was average in 2015.
- Pupils achieve well in mathematics. Pupils concentrate well in mathematics lessons and get on quickly. They persevere when the work is tricky and they want to do their best. For example, during the inspection, one pupil commented to his friend, 'I can't talk now I'm afraid – I'm concentrating' when he was working out an answer. They use practical equipment with increasing confidence to help them to get to grips with new concepts and to solve mathematical problems. The most-able regularly complete more challenging tasks which extend and deepen their understanding very well.
- In 2015, attainment in writing and mathematics was average at the end of both key stages, reflecting pupils' good progress from their starting points.
- The school's strong focus on developing pupils' speaking and language skills is making a notable difference to pupils' literacy skills. For example, during the inspection, pupils in Year 1 enjoyed experimenting with words when talking about their feelings.
- Pupils are keen to emulate their teachers and other adults in school and learn from their example. For example, during the inspection, a child in Reception Year reminded another to point at the words to help him when reading, while a pupil in Year 1 commented, 'tremendous' in praise of a neighbour's success.
- The most-able pupils make much faster progress in reading, writing and mathematics than at the time of the previous inspection. Their progress continues to accelerate in all year groups because teachers have consistently high expectations. The proportion achieving the higher levels (Level 3 and Level 5) increased in all subjects at the end of both key stages in 2015. Below-average proportions achieving the higher levels in reading and writing reflect pupils' individual needs and starting points. Information about their progress indicates that the most-able made good progress. The proportion achieving the higher levels in mathematics were above average at the end of both key stages.
- Most disadvantaged pupils make the same good progress as their classmates. The gap in attainment between this group and other pupils nationally has narrowed each year since the previous inspection, and considerably so in 2015.
- Pupils with disabilities and those with special educational needs get on with their work well and make good progress.

Early years provision is good

- The early years leader has improved the quality of provision substantially since the previous inspection, including better teaching and closer working with parents. Improvements have made a considerable impact on children's progress, leading to a marked increase in children's achievement over the past three years. The proportion achieving a good level of development doubled in 2014 to average levels, with a further substantial increase in 2015. Good achievement ensures children are well prepared for learning in Year 1.
- Children's knowledge and skills when they join Reception Year are lower than those typical for their age. Effective teaching ensures that they make good progress and achieve well. The early years teacher quickly checks their needs when they start school and carefully plans a wide range of activities. These appeal to children's curiosity and contribute well to their learning and to the development of personal skills. The strong focus on improving language skills effectively equips children with the tools needed to express themselves and to get on well with their friends.
- Adults look after children very well, giving them a warm welcome at the start of the school day and listening to what they have to say. This helps children to be confident, secure and happy. Parents say that they are very happy with the school and that their children have settled well.
- The early years leader ensures safeguarding arrangements are robust so that children are safe. Children's behaviour is good. Activities such as the weekly yoga sessions add to children's enjoyment of school, helping them to feel calm and quiet amidst a busy school day.
- The teacher provides children with good-quality equipment. She makes sure that resources are well organised so that children can easily access them when needed. The teacher arranges events, such as bus journeys and visits to local art events, which expand children's horizons. Experiences such as these contribute well to children's learning by, for example, giving them ideas for their writing and pictures.

- While disadvantaged children achieve well, with the proportion achieving a good level of development above the national average in 2015, the figure was slightly lower for this group than for others. Leaders are determined to ensure that all children achieve their very best. Their checks on children's progress and good use of additional funds ensure that this group makes at least good progress.

School details

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| Unique reference number | 118676 |
| Local authority | Kent |
| Inspection number | 10005778 |

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

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| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Voluntary controlled |
| Age range of pupils | 4–11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 105 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Glynn Hukins |
| Headteacher | Toni Deacon |
| Telephone number | 01303 255400 |
| Website | www.stpetersfolkestone.com |
| Email address | office@st-peters-folkestone.kent.sch.uk |
| Date of previous inspection | 11–12 July 2013 |

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium is above that found in most schools. The pupil premium is additional government funding to support those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and children who are looked after by the local authority.
- Most pupils are White British. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is below average.
- The proportion of pupils with disabilities and those who have special educational needs is above average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress by the end of Year 6.
- The school provides full-time early years provision in a Reception Year class.
- There is a breakfast club on site, which is managed by the school and was included in this inspection.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed learning in 12 lessons or part lessons, all of which were observed with the headteacher and the reading manager or one of the assistant headteachers.
- The inspector held discussions with the headteacher, senior leaders, teachers, members of staff, parents and pupils. She also held a meeting with the Chair of the Governing Body and three other governors.
- The inspector took account of 16 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View. In addition, she considered the views expressed by parents who spoke with her informally at the start of the school day, as well as written comments received during the inspection.
- The inspector observed the school's work and considered a range of documents, including the school's improvement plan, information about pupils' progress, attendance records and safeguarding policies.
- The inspector looked at a sample of pupils' work provided by the school, as well as looking at pupils' work in lessons. She also listened to pupils in Year 2 and 6 reading.

Inspection team

Julie Sackett, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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