

# Langafel Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Main Road, Longfield, DA3 7PW

## Inspection dates

20–21 March 2013

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

## Summary of key findings for parents and carers and pupils

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

- The quality of teaching is inconsistent. It is stronger in some year groups than others.
- 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 the pace of learning dips.
- The school has a wealth of data but senior leaders take too much responsibility for analysing this, limiting the involvement of teachers in checking that their pupils are all doing well enough over time.
- In some lessons teachers do not make it clear to pupils what the purpose of their learning is or enable them to tell whether they have been successful.
- When marking pupils' work, not all teachers give clear guidance on how to improve.
- Some parents and carers say that they are not aware of how the school focuses on minimising disruptions and keeping their children safe.

### The school has the following strengths

- Leaders, including governors, are determined for the school to improve and are ambitious for all pupils to fulfil their potential and have equal opportunities to prosper.
- The headteacher is taking a strong lead in driving change and staff now understand what they need to do to improve the quality of teaching and raise pupils' achievement.
- Relationships throughout the school are good and during the inspection there were no disruptions in lessons or around the school.
- Pupils are tolerant and caring of each other. They understand what bullying is and that it is wrong.
- The curriculum is well planned through topics and themes that give pupils a range of positive experiences and supports their learning.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching in all classes including the resourced mainstream provision, SLIC (Socialise Learn Interact Communicate). They visited 12 lessons of which four were joint observations with either the headteacher or the deputy headteacher. In addition inspectors made a number of short visits to lessons, assemblies and the breakfast club.
- 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 43 responses to the on-line Parent View survey and individual communications from parents and carers.
- They observed the school’s work and looked at a number of documents, including the school’s current information about pupils’ progress, the self-evaluation summary, the development plan, the local authority health check, minutes of meetings of the governing body, records relating to behaviour and attendance, and safeguarding documents.
- The inspectors analysed 28 questionnaires from staff.

## Inspection team

Gay Whent, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Andrew Lyons

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This is an average-sized primary school.
- The school runs a breakfast club and an after-school club.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in two Reception classes.
- The headteacher and deputy headteacher have been in post since September 2011. Prior to this the school had a period of turbulence with three headteachers in a short space of time.
- The school has a specially resourced provision, Socialise Learn Interact Communicate, for pupils who are diagnosed as having Autistic Spectrum Disorder. All of the 17 available places are filled.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported at school action is below average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- 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 below average. There are currently a small number of looked after children but no children of service families.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which sets the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

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

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good or better by making sure that all teachers:
  - apply the school's marking policy consistently and plan for pupils to have enough time to read and respond to teachers' comments in their books so that they know how to improve their work
  - set precise 'next steps' for learning for each pupil, closely matched to their needs and abilities so that they know what they are expected to achieve
  - use the best teaching in the school as a model for learning.
- Improve the impact of leadership and management by:
  - communicating more fully to parents and carers the actions taken to address any disruption in lessons
  - ensuring that senior leaders share responsibility more widely for checking pupils' progress and analysing test results so that teachers are more knowledgeable about how well their pupils are achieving over time and can adapt their planning to meet pupils' needs even more accurately.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### requires improvement

- Most children join the Reception class with knowledge and skills that are below those expected for their age. Their personal, social and emotional skills enable them to settle into school quickly and start to benefit from all it offers. Although they generally make good progress, they are still below average at the beginning of Year 1.
- Pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is below national average by the end of Year 2. Higher attainment in 2011 was not sustained in 2012. Fewer pupils are working at the higher levels in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 2.
- The teaching of phonics (learning about the sounds that letters make) is improving since the purchase of a commercial scheme to improve achievement in reading and writing. As a result, pupils are now 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 make average progress in reading, writing and mathematics. An increasing number of pupils exceed national progress in writing.
- Pupils who benefit from the pupil premium funding make good progress overall as their needs are accurately identified and a range of effective strategies are put into place to improve their learning. The funding has been used to purchase a wide range of additional resources for mathematics and reading and put into place successful homework support sessions. In the 2012 national assessment at age 11, although their attainment, as demonstrated by their average point scores, was below that of other pupils in the school in English and below similar pupils nationally it was above that of other pupils in the school in mathematics and above similar pupils nationally. The school tracks their progress six times a year at the end of every term in order to meet their learning needs ever more precisely.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good or better progress in mathematics. They do not all make good progress in English. This is because the support and resources they receive in mathematics ensure that provision is finely matched to their next learning steps. Pupils based in the Social Learn Interact Communicate classes learn well both there and in the school. They make good progress as provision is tailored to their specific learning needs by teachers and their teaching assistants.
- Pupils' progress across the school is now checked more regularly and methodically than in the past. The school has a wealth of data but senior leaders take too much responsibility for analysing this, limiting the involvement of teachers in checking that their pupils are all doing well enough over time. In mathematics, in an outstanding lesson, pupils in a Key Stage 2 group were making rapid progress because their next steps had been clearly defined. Skills were taught through real-life and highly enjoyable activities including singing. They carried out problem-solving activities related to the seven times table using clear mathematical explanations and referred to vocabulary such as multiples on their working wall.
- Where the marking policy is applied well, it produces honest comments from pupils such as: 'I found number three really hard because I could not make a concave octagon with two lines of symmetry easily.'

### The quality of teaching

### requires improvement

- Teaching is not yet consistently good across the school and this variability results in some pupils underachieving. The quality of teaching seen during the inspection varied from inadequate to outstanding. A large majority of teaching is now good or better, an improvement since the last inspection.
- Where teachers do not have a clear understanding of pupils' abilities, for example in relation to their writing ability, some groups of pupils do not make good progress and their learning slows.

As a result targets for pupils' next steps in learning are not always precisely matched to their abilities.

- Where teaching requires improvement teachers do not take enough account of assessment information to plan work that always challenges and extends pupils. This is especially the case in Key Stage 1 where progress has generally been slower than in other key stages.
- Marking varies in quality across the school. When teachers' marking poses questions to pupils, these often go unanswered. An example of outstanding marking was given by a Year 5 pupil sharing her proudest success in improving her work. She improved her original sentence 'her family were not poor but not rich' to 'she lived a comfortable life where she was fortunate enough to have everything she needed.'
- Mixed age groups of pupils are now learning in ability groups across the key stages. Teaching assistants often have a key role with a specific group of pupils in order to move their learning on at a faster rate. Where teachers have a very clear understanding of pupils' abilities and their next steps in learning, progress is clear. Another new system, an online mathematics programme, is showing a positive impact on improved outcomes for learners by helping pupils to enjoy mathematics.
- In some classes, pupils' understanding is regularly checked during the lesson before moving on to the next step. As a result of this successful approach a small group of Year 6 pupils in a writing lesson discussed in pairs words which they could not explain in a poem. One pair chose the word 'dredge' which they looked up in the dictionary. They found three alternative meanings and decided which one was the best fit. They then read the poem through once more to make sure they now had a clearer understanding.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils are good**

- Pupils are friendly, enthusiastic learners. They say they enjoy their learning. Almost all parents and carers agree that their child is happy at school.
- Pupils say that typical behaviour in the school is good and any incidents of misbehaviour are dealt with well. They say that there is some bad behaviour but it is treated appropriately. This contrasts with the negative views expressed by a significant minority of parents and carers informally at the start of the school day and also in the on-line Parent View survey. Pupils do learn to treat everyone with respect and the school presents itself as a tolerant and caring community. Improving communications with parents and carers so that more of them understand how the school looks after their children is an area for improvement.
- The breakfast club, attended by pupils of all ages, provides a good start to the day. It has proved an effective strategy in helping some pupils to come to school regularly. Attendance has been improving year on year.
- Pupils behave sensibly when moving around the school, in lessons, in the dining hall and in assembly. Playtime can be occasionally over boisterous owing to a lack of any different activities and broken playtime equipment waiting to be repaired. As a result behaviour and safety of pupils are not outstanding.
- Fostering good relationships is an important focus for the school. Pupils show respect for each other's differences and are ambassadors for their motto: friendship and learning.
- Pupils otherwise say they feel safe in the school. Older pupils say that there is 'definitely not!' any bullying in the school. Older pupils know how to keep themselves safe, particularly when they use the internet.
- Parents and carers of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are especially appreciative of the good provision for their children. One wrote: 'Small victories are shouted from the rooftops and my child is flourishing.'

**The leadership and management** require improvement

- The school has been through a period of turbulence in leadership. The leadership of the headteacher and the deputy headteacher together with the provision manager are strong. They have the confidence of their team. Staff say that the school is well led and that: 'There is a clear vision and drive to give pupils the opportunities to achieve the best that they can.'
- The headteacher and her leadership team have initiated steps to raise pupils' achievement which are starting to show greater improvements in progress. In the words of one parent: 'I feel very strongly that under our new management team the future is much brighter for the school.'
- The school has a wealth of data to check pupils' progress. These are used well by senior leaders to identify any groups who may not be doing well enough, but they take on too much responsibility for doing this. While they have started to share data with some staff, this is not extensive enough to enable all staff to have a full awareness of how well the pupils in their groups are progressing.
- The school's self-evaluation accurately focuses on improving teaching and increasing outcomes for pupils. Regular pupil progress meetings review the provision for pupils. This process, together with observations of learning in the classroom, now holds teachers to account and ensures that the school gives good value for money. The school demonstrates good capacity to move forward and to continue its current improvement.
- The headteacher has considerably strengthened the way in which teachers are appraised for their performance. Their targets reflect school priorities and include a focus on improving pupils' progress. A good programme for professional training is provided to improve teachers' skills, knowledge and understanding. Leaders are not yet making the best use of outstanding teaching in the school as a model for learning.
- The use of additional pupil premium funding is reported to parents and carers through the school's website which shows how the money has been spent. Leaders now carefully assess the impact of this additional funding to ensure that it has the necessary impact.
- The local authority has provided appropriate support for the new leadership team particularly to validate their judgements of where improvements are needed and outline clear next steps for improvement for the school.
- The curriculum is rich and interesting and promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Pupils say that they enjoy their learning and particularly a programme of interesting visits where pupils learn about art, history and their own cultural heritage.
- 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 governance of the school:**
  - Governors challenge the school and ask questions in order to clarify their understanding, for instance, of new initiatives. They are fully aware of why pupils have underperformed in the past and have compared this to all schools nationally. Governors have a good understanding of the school's areas for improvement through their involvement and links with the school development plan and apply this to their visits. Performance management is used increasingly effectively and underperformance is being tackled. Governors undertake training conscientiously. The Chair of the Governing Body is undertaking current training with the National College. They have a good range of skills and backgrounds and make an effective team. The school's finances are effectively managed. Governors have a clear plan for how the pupil premium is spent and ensure that this is correctly directed 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.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	118711
<b>Local authority</b>	Kent
<b>Inspection number</b>	405812

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	247
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Paul Harrison
<b>Headteacher</b>	Catherine Woodbine
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	10–11 February 2011
<b>Telephone number</b>	01474 703398
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