

Langafel Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Main Road, Longfield, DA3 7PW

Inspection dates 5–6 March 2015

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The headteacher provides good leadership and has the full support of staff and governors.
- Senior leaders, including governors, work together well and have made sure that there have been significant improvements since the previous inspection, particularly in teaching and pupils' achievement.
- Pupils achieve well. All groups of pupils make good progress from their starting points in reading, writing and mathematics. By the time they leave at the end of Year 6, attainment is above average.
- Pupils in the specially resourced provision make good progress. Their specific needs are met well and they are included in all the school's activities.
- Teaching is typically good. Teachers make learning interesting and fun, and engage pupils well in their lessons. There are good relationships between staff and pupils so pupils work hard and want to do well.
- Children get a good start to school in the early years. Good teaching and interesting activities motivate them and help them learn well.
- Pupils behave well. They enjoy school and have good attitudes to learning. They are polite and friendly, and respectful of each other and adults.
- Pupils feel safe, happy and are well looked after.
- Governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas to improve, and hold leaders to account effectively.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- There is not enough outstanding teaching to make sure that all pupils make rapid progress.
- Sometimes, expectations are not consistently high enough and so work is not sufficiently challenging for the most-able pupils.
- Pupils' writing skills in Key Stage 1 are not as good as they should be. There are not enough opportunities for them to write for different reasons in different subjects.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 17 lessons, some of which were joint observations with the headteacher or deputy headteacher. In addition, inspectors talked to pupils about their work, looked at books, listened to some pupils read and observed pupils at playtimes and lunchtimes.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher and deputy headteacher, and other staff with key leadership responsibilities. Discussions were held with pupils, governors and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors looked at a wide range of documents including: the school's own check on its performance and the quality of teaching; the school improvement plan; information on pupils' progress; and records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding. Inspectors looked at the 50 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, and spoke to some parents at the start of the school day. Inspectors also took account of 37 questionnaires returned by staff.

Inspection team

Margaret Coussins, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
James Waite	Additional Inspector
Sheila Cohring	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Langafel is an average-sized primary school. The number of pupils on roll has increased since the previous inspection. Pupils in Key Stage 1 and 2 are taught in mixed-age classes.
- The school has a specially resourced provision, known in the school community as SLIC (Socialise Learn Interact Communicate), for pupils who are diagnosed as having autistic spectrum disorder. The resource has 17 pupils who are taught in two classes.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is above average because of the pupils in the SLIC classes.
- The proportion of pupils who are supported by the pupil premium is below average. The pupil premium is additional government funding for those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and for children who are looked after. In 2014, there were too few disadvantaged pupils in Year 6 to report explicitly on their attainment compared with other pupils.
- Provision is made for the early years in two Reception classes, which the children attend full time.
- There is pre-school provision on the school site. This is managed by a private provider and therefore not included in this inspection.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The school provides a daily breakfast and after-school club.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further improve teaching in order to raise pupils' achievement by:
 - making sure that teachers' expectations are consistently high so that the most-able pupils complete more challenging work and make faster progress.
- Improve pupils' achievement in writing in Years 1 and 2 and ensure that pupils have more opportunities to write for different reasons in a range of subjects.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher and the governing body have taken effective action to improve the school since the previous inspection.
- Senior leaders share the headteacher's determination to provide the very best learning and experiences for pupils. They have an accurate view of the school's strengths and what needs to be done to further improve its performance.
- The quality of teaching is checked carefully through observations, pupils' work and close scrutiny of the progress pupils make. Where any weaknesses are identified, support is provided and improvement is expected. As a result, progress has improved. There is not yet, however, enough teaching that is typically outstanding.
- Arrangements for managing teachers' performance and salary progression are well established and effective. Teachers know they are accountable for pupils' progress. There are good professional development opportunities for staff to help them improve their skills and meet challenging whole-school and individual targets.
- Subject leaders and other staff with key areas of responsibility manage and lead their areas well. They provide good guidance to colleagues as well as skills and expertise in their own areas of responsibility.
- The SLIC provision is led and managed well and ensures that pupils benefit from the specialist support and opportunities to integrate into the mainstream classes to learn alongside others.
- Additional primary physical education and sports funding is used effectively to provide specialist teaching for pupils and to develop teachers' skills. Funding is also used to provide additional swimming lessons for Year 6 pupils so that they all leave the school with the ability to swim at least 25 metres. More pupils now take part in a range of different sports, which benefits their health and well-being.
- Additional funding for disadvantaged pupils is used effectively. The funding provides extra support in English and mathematics, support for pupils' social and emotional needs, and activities to boost pupils' confidence and self-esteem.
- The school promotes equality of opportunity and is committed to making it possible for all pupils to fulfil their potential in a supportive, caring school without fear of any type of discrimination. All staff foster good relations throughout the school community and beyond.
- The school teaches a broad and balanced range of subjects with an appropriate emphasis on developing pupils' literacy and numeracy skills. The curriculum is planned well for pupils in the mixed-age classes and has been adapted to meet the new requirements. Activities are interesting and promote pupils' enthusiasm for learning. Trips and extra activities including clubs add to pupils' experiences.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well through the curriculum and through the school's cChristian values as a church school. Pupils learn about, and have respect for, differences in faiths, cultures and backgrounds. Leaders ensure pupils have a good understanding of British values such as democracy and understand the need for rules in school and the wider community. This helps to ensure pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- The large majority of parents who responded to Parent View, and all of those who spoke with inspectors, expressed confidence in the leadership and management of the school. One parent commented: 'The headteacher listens and solves any problems. Everyone feels special.' Since the previous inspection, the school has worked hard to increase communication with parents and to listen to their views. Parents appreciate the parent forum that was established last year as a further means of expressing their views on all aspects of school life.
- All safeguarding procedures and policies meet statutory requirements and are well known and implemented by all staff to ensure pupils are safe.
- The local authority has supported the school very effectively to ensure improvements in the school.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Since the previous inspection, the governing body has, with the support of the local authority, undertaken a review of its work to see how it could increase its effectiveness. As a result, it has changed its structure and way of working, and successfully improved its effectiveness in holding the school to account for its performance.
 - Governors know the school well, its strengths and priorities for improvement. They understand the school information on pupils' achievement and how well the school performs compared to other schools nationally. They are well informed about all aspects of the school's work by the headteacher and their own visits and links to the school.

- There is a good understanding of the quality of teaching and governors ensure that targets linked to pupils' progress are used to reward good performance. They know what the school is doing to tackle any underperformance.
- Governors have a clear understanding of how the pupil premium and sports funding are spent and the impact they have on pupils' achievement.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils behave well in lessons, around the school, in the playground and when working with adults. They are considerate and respectful to all staff and to each other. School records show that good behaviour is typical over time.
- Behaviour in the SLIC classes is good. When SLIC pupils join in with the mainstream classes, other pupils are tolerant and understanding of their needs. A group of pupils agreed with one who said: 'We all benefit from learning together.'
- Pupils are friendly and polite, and were confident and happy to talk to inspectors about their work and their school. There are trusting relationships with staff who are good role models in building a culture of respect.
- Good attitudes to learning help pupils to make good progress. They are always ready to learn and listen attentively to each other and their teachers. On occasion, when teaching does not fully engage and motivate pupils, a few pupils can become distracted and inattentive and lose their focus on learning.
- Pupils enjoy celebrating others' achievements, as seen in collective worship. Pupils' behaviour was exemplary as they watched a parade of winners dressed as their favourite book characters to celebrate World Book Week and applauded pupils' academic and personal achievements.
- The few pupils who sometimes have difficulty controlling their own behaviour, because they have specific behaviour needs, are managed well and staff ensure that the learning of other pupils is not disrupted.
- Attendance is average and the school is robust in promoting regular attendance.
- Most parents who responded to Parent View agree that their children are happy at school and behave well.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils say they feel safe 'because everyone looks after us'.
- Pupils know about different kinds of bullying, including cyber-bullying and prejudiced-based bullying. They say that sometimes friends fall out but that any bullying is very rare. They are confident that if any incidents should occur, adults, and especially the headteacher, would deal with them quickly and fairly.
- Pupils understand the dangers of the internet and know how to keep themselves safe online.
- Most parents agree that the school keeps their children safe and that they are well looked after at school.
- Pupils who attend the breakfast or after-school club get a good, safe and social start or end to the day.

The quality of teaching is good

- Pupils learn well because teaching is good. They are interested in their work and enjoy what they do. Pupils are clear about what they are learning. They know their targets and what they need to do to achieve them. Literacy, reading and mathematics are taught well through meaningful and relevant activities.
- Teachers' good subject knowledge and skilled questioning to check pupils' understanding often challenges pupils to think deeply and extend their thoughts and ideas.
- For example, pupils in Year 6 were exploring the feelings of the main character in a wordless picture book. Probing questions prompted pupils to give carefully considered responses and use rich and precise vocabulary. This helped them make good progress in developing their writing as well as using accurate grammar and punctuation.
- The quality of marking and feedback is effective. In most cases in Key Stage 2 and the SLIC classes, pupils have time to read, reflect and respond to teachers' comments on their work, and as a result, have a clear idea of how to improve. This is less consistent in pupils' writing work in Years 1 and 2.
- Relationships between staff and pupils are positive. Pupils enjoy learning, work hard and want to do well.
- Displays and technology are used well by most teachers and pupils to support learning. For example,

'working wall' provides prompts and reminders to pupils in literacy and mathematics.

- Teachers generally have high expectations for pupils' learning. However, on occasion, expectations of what pupils can achieve are too low and so teachers do not make sufficient demands on pupils or provide them with appropriate challenges. This is often the case for the most-able pupils and, as a result, they do not always build rapidly on their skills and make the progress of which they are capable.

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children start in the Reception classes with skills and knowledge that are below those typical for their age. Children's skills in reading and writing are particularly weak. They make good progress in the early years because of the good provision.
- Pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics have improved since the previous inspection and are now good overall. Leaders have correctly identified, however, that writing in Years 1 and 2, despite marked improvement, remains the weakest subject. Pupils have too few opportunities to write at length for different reasons in different subjects.
- By the time pupils leave at the end of Year 6, pupils' achievement in reading, writing and mathematics is good. Standards in 2014 were above the national averages because pupils made good progress from their different starting points. The attainment of Year 6 pupils in the mainstream classes was better than indicated in the published results, which include all of the pupils. Despite making good progress, some pupils in the SLIC group who had additional complex needs did not attain the expected levels.
- In 2014, the proportion of the most-able pupils achieving the higher level at the end of Key Stage 2 improved considerably in all subjects from 2013. The proportion was above that found nationally in writing and close to national in reading and mathematics. The most-able pupils achieved less well in grammar, punctuation and spelling.
- In 2014, the proportion of pupils reaching the required level in the Year 1 phonics check (the sounds that letters make) was below average. Leaders took this very seriously and reviewed the effectiveness of the phonics teaching. Extra support is provided for the pupils who need to catch up. As a result, they are now making faster progress.
- Reading for enjoyment is promoted well across the school. Older pupils are fluent, expressive readers. They enjoy a range of authors and poets, and can express their preferences for styles of writing. One pupil said: 'As I develop my skills as a reader, I develop skills as a writer too.' Pupils develop good understanding of the texts they read and skills of reading between the lines to infer meaning.
- An increased focus on mental mathematics and a new calculations policy support pupils' good achievement in mathematics.
- The needs of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are well met in the mainstream classes. As a consequence, they make similar good progress to others.
- Pupils in the SLIC classes make good progress. Any barriers to learning that they have to overcome do not lower the school's expectations of what they can achieve.
- Disadvantaged pupils across the school make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics because they are given effective support. In 2014, there were too few eligible pupils in Year 6 to comment on their attainment compared to other pupils.

The early years provision is good

- Children in the early years are given a good start to school. As a result of good teaching, children catch up quickly from their starting points and make good progress in all areas of learning. The proportion achieving a good level of development increased significantly in 2014 from the previous year and is above the national average. As a result, children are well prepared to continue their learning in Year 1.
- Children are provided with stimulating, exciting activities indoors and outside. Opportunities for investigation and creativity are promoted well, as are opportunities for children to make decisions and choose for themselves.
- Children work and play extremely well together. They are confident, share and take turns, help each other and behave very well. They are well cared for and kept safe.
- Staff are caring and sensitive to children's individual abilities and any special educational needs. They engage well with the children, asking questions to help children explain their ideas and understanding. This helps move their learning forward and develops their vocabulary.
- Phonic skills are taught well and children quickly develop a love of books and stories. They learn to

express themselves and communicate through writing. However, writing is not always promoted as effectively in the outside area, which limits children's opportunities to find reasons for writing and make further progress.

- The leadership of the early years is good. Assessments of achievements are used well to check on children's progress and plan the next steps. There are excellent relationships between staff and children.

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	118711
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	453638

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

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	280
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Paul Harrison
Headteacher	Catherine Woodbine
Date of previous school inspection	20–21 March 2013
Telephone number	01474 703398
Fax number	01474 709386
Email address	headteacher@langafel.kent.sch.uk

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