

Chantry Community Academy

Ordnance Road, Gravesend, Kent, DA12 2RL

Inspection dates 13–14 May 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected as an academy
	This inspection:	Inadequate 4
Leadership and management		Requires improvement 3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires improvement 3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement 3
Achievement of pupils		Inadequate 4
Early years provision		Requires improvement 3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that has serious weaknesses.

- Despite recent improvements, pupils do not yet achieve well enough. Standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 in English and mathematics are low. They are well below the national average.
- Too few pupils reach higher levels of attainment.
- In 2014, too few children, by the end of their Reception Year, had all of the skills needed to be fully prepared for Year 1.
- Pupils behave respectfully, but sometimes too excitably, in lessons, with some teaching time wasted as a result.
- Parental engagement at the school, while growing, is on a small scale. There are no parent governors.
- The school does not identify clearly, the strengths and weaknesses in teaching. This makes it harder to identify what needs to improve.
- Pupils entitled to additional support funded by the pupil premium do not do as well as they should. The impact of this expenditure is not checked clearly enough.
- Pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language underachieve.
- Staff do not always correct, when needed, spoken grammatical errors made by pupils who are learning English.
- In too many lessons, the work that pupils are set is not matched well enough to their needs, and this limits their progress.
- Where there is no data available, subject leaders are not sufficiently sure about how well pupils are doing. This makes their planning for improvement more difficult.

The school has the following strengths

- The head of school, ably supported by the deputy head of school, leads very well. She is encouraging to staff and is building purposeful and committed teams very effectively.
- The school has an interesting, varied curriculum which suitably promotes British values and pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Subject leaders contribute very usefully to this.
- Most lessons interest and engage pupils well.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school and feel safe.
- The governing body is rightly supportive of the head of school and is suitably challenging.
- The school evaluates itself honestly.
- Parents are understandably pleased with the improvements in the school.
- Improved teaching and marking of pupils' work is leading to many pupils making better progress.
- Staff performance is managed appropriately.
- Staff are dedicated and enjoy working at the school.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed the school at work. They saw 17 lessons across all classes, some jointly with senior staff. They attended an assembly and observed behaviour at playtimes and as pupils moved around the school.
- The inspectors held meetings with the head of school, deputy head of school, members of staff, members of the governing body and pupils. They spoke by telephone with a director of the academy trust.
- They heard pupils read and looked at a wide range of pupils' work from all year groups in books, folders and on display.
- Inspectors took careful consideration of the views of 18 parents shown on Parent View on the Ofsted website. They met with parents and considered the results of the school's own recent parental questionnaire. They took note of the 29 confidential questionnaires received from staff members.
- They evaluated documentation. This included the academy improvement plan and self-evaluations, minutes of meetings and data showing the progress made by pupils.

Inspection team

Robin Hammerton, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Abigail Wilkinson

Her Majesty's Inspector

Jan Edwards

Additional Inspector

Full report

In accordance with 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.

Information about this school

- Chantry Community Academy converted to become an academy school on 1 June 2013. This is its first inspection. When its predecessor school, Chantry Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted it was judged to be satisfactory overall. The school is sponsored by the Meopham Community Academies Trust (MCAT).
- It is situated close to the centre of Gravesend. It is expanding and is slightly larger than the average primary school. It has part-time provision for 52 nursery-age pupils and two full-time Reception classes.
- A higher than average proportion of pupils are entitled to additional support funded by the pupil premium. This is provided for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals or who are looked after.
- A higher than average proportion of pupils are disabled or have special educational needs.
- The school serves a diverse pupil population. A higher than average proportion of pupils speak English as an additional language. At least 27 languages are spoken by pupils.
- The school did not meet the government's floor standards in 2014. This sets the minimum expectations for pupils' progress and attainment in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- The head of school has just begun to receive coaching from the headteacher of Northfleet Technology College, who is also a National Leader of Education.
- The school shares a site with the Little Pebbles Children's Centre. This is managed and inspected separately.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Remove the underachievement of pupils who speak English as an additional language, disadvantaged pupils, disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, and raise the performance of all pupils, including those capable of attaining very highly, by:
 - catering explicitly and with determination for the assessed needs of individuals and groups of pupils in day-to-day lessons and in all additional support activities
 - ensuring that any grammatical errors made in speech by pupils are rectified quickly by staff.
- Avoid time being wasted in lessons when pupils are too slow to get ready for learning activities.
- Strengthen school self-evaluation by:
 - identifying clearly the key strengths and areas for improvement in teaching, so that these can be addressed
 - ensuring that subject leaders know clearly how well pupils are achieving in their subjects.
- Recruit parent governors.

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management

require improvement

- The head of school leads very well. Her encouraging style engages staff, parents and the community. She is clear about what is needed. She is successfully building a culture in which teaching and behaviour are notably improving. But she knows there is much more yet to do.
- The deputy head of school supports effectively. She provides valuable coaching and support as the leader for English and within the early years.
- The relationship between this school and MCAT, while helpful, has not been successful enough in supporting the needed improvements. Links between staff across the schools in MCAT are facilitate the sharing good practice. The MCAT provides some useful advice. However, the overall responsibility for improvement has been largely left to the head of school without sufficient leadership support. Rightly, therefore, the local authority has recently stepped in and started to provide valuable help. The local teaching alliance also supports well.
- The school develops useful professional links with nearby schools. Almost all subject leaders are members of informative networks, which help them in developing their subjects. The head of school has constructive relationships with other local headteachers. She has benefited, albeit at a very early stage, from her work so far with the National Leader of Education.
- The academy development plan is now fully the responsibility of the head of school, after changes within the MCAT. It is a useful and effective document, leading to well-timed and targeted improvements being made, which have accelerated in the last few months.
- The parents who met with inspectors are very pleased with the improvements. They say the head of school leads very well and they appreciate the fact that staff are readily available to them.
- Their questionnaires show that most staff feel well supported and led. One summed up the situation appropriately, saying that the school has made much recent progress, that staff are dedicated, but that this is not yet showing enough in pupils' attainment.
- The school evaluates itself accurately. In particular, the progress made by the different groups of pupils is sharply analysed. The school knows the overall quality of teaching. However, key strengths and weaknesses in teaching are not fully identified. Thus, although there is an appropriate programme of staff development and coaching, and teaching is better as a result, it is not yet strong enough to deal with all the underachievement in the academy.
- The school is committed to equal opportunities. It is a harmonious community of many cultures, languages and religions. However, more needs to be done to tackle discrimination. Key groups of pupils, including those who speak English as an additional language and those with special educational needs, are not achieving as well as they should.
- The coordinators for special educational needs and for English as an additional language both show relevant expertise and are working hard to improve provision for the pupils they each serve. This work is at an early stage, and it is not possible yet to identify any significant impact.
- Subject leaders work very hard and, as a result, the pupils enjoy interesting lessons across the curriculum. The leaders plan carefully. They are beginning to find out how well pupils achieve in their subjects. However, more work is needed to get this absolutely right, so that they can plan ahead using better information.
- The system for managing the performance of staff is appropriate. The head of school is aware that it needs to be used better to hold staff to account for the progress of different groups of pupils.
- Pupil premium funding is not used well enough to reduce the wide gaps in progress and attainment between disadvantaged and the other pupils. The school arranges many interventions, and spends money appropriately on ensuring pupils can take part in visits. However, the impact of this work is not checked carefully enough.
- The school's broad curriculum contributes well to pupils' understanding of British values, such as tolerance and democracy. It also suitably supports pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development. There are productive links with the Kent music hub. Pupils have useful opportunities to visit and find out about places of worship, such as the local church and gurdwara. They show real understanding of the diversity of life in modern Britain. The head of school ensures that the different communities in the area contribute usefully to school life. Pupils learn about different jobs they might choose one day.
- The school makes strenuous efforts to engage better with parents. More parents now attend parents' evenings. Parents who expressed their view to inspectors are very appreciative of recent improvements.
- The school takes its responsibility for safeguarding pupils very seriously and considers its approaches carefully. It fully meets statutory requirements.

- The funding the school receives for physical education is well used. All pupils benefit from expert coaches that the school has bought in. The school monitors the quality of this coaching carefully. Participation in lessons and out-of-school activity is popular and of an improving standard. Staff have benefited from relevant training in improving their teaching of sports.
- The school monitors attendance and behaviour proactively and with appropriate rigour. Both are improving.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The local governing body has significant powers delegated by the board of MCAT. Some governors, including the Chair, are very experienced. They are committed and well organised, visiting the school often, gaining useful first-hand knowledge. They know how teaching and leadership are improving, as a result. They are also clear, from reports from the head of school, about the underperformance of groups of pupils. Their discussions with the head of school are useful in helping explore alternatives when key decisions are needed. They ensure that staff performance management and pay progression operate correctly. However, governors have not been able to ensure that pupil premium funding is used well enough. The governing body has implemented the recommendations from a recent review. For example, they are improving their minutes of meetings, so that they include more information about the challenging questions they raise. The governing body is small and is carrying vacancies. Despite some early attempts, it has not been able to recruit any parent governors. The senior governors realise how important this is to resolve.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

require improvement

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- In lessons, pupils are mostly attentive and ready to learn. They enjoy constructive relationships with each other and the staff. In a Year 1 art lesson, for example, pupils were very keen to look at each other's sketches and celebrate each other's work. However, sometimes, pupils can become too noisy and excitable, especially when changing from one activity to another, which can waste some time and slow down their learning.
- A few members of staff, in their questionnaires, said that pupils' behaviour is not well managed. But the considerable majority felt otherwise. Inspection evidence shows that the school's behaviour policy is well known to staff, pupils and many parents. It is increasingly effective in ensuring that seriously disruptive behaviour is minimal.
- Pupils' presentation of work is mixed but improving. This shows their increasing pride in what they can achieve.
- Inspectors saw pupils behaving sensibly and positively at the start of the day, in the playground, assembly and breakfast club. Some pupils occasionally need minor reminders by staff about their behaviour.
- Pupils and parents are generally pleased with how the school deals with any bullying. The school has worked closely with parents, and informed them, about the steps it takes to help prevent bullying.
- There have been no exclusions in this academic year. The school's improved behaviour policy is effective in stopping any behaviour problems becoming major.
- Pupils have increasing opportunities to take responsibility. They serve happily as school councillors, and as young interpreters, for example. Regular 'circle time' sessions in each class encourage pupils to reflect on their attitudes and behaviour.
- Pupils' attendance is slightly below average. It has improved notably this year. The well-organised administrative staff team proactively supports families to ensure pupils attend school regularly.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good.
- Staff are correctly and properly trained in child protection and safeguarding procedures.
- Robust and thorough procedures are in place to deal with any major concerns about pupils' welfare; these include good links with outside agencies as needed. Necessary documentation is carefully kept.
- The school site is kept secure. It is welcoming to parents and others.
- Pupils feel safe in school. They find it a happy place. Inspectors observed them managing risk sensibly. They say that 'If you have trouble, there is always someone to talk to.' They are pleased that staff are

supportive in sorting out problems.

The quality of teaching requires improvement

- Although the quality of teaching requires improvement, teachers' expectations of pupils are rising. There are several consistent strengths in teaching. Consequently, pupils' progress in writing, reading and mathematics is improving.
- Lessons across the school are purposeful. They proceed at a suitable pace. Teachers and teaching assistants give clear explanations. Relationships between staff and pupils are thoughtful and constructive.
- Teachers generally question pupils well, encouraging them to think more deeply. On some occasions, however, teachers do too much for the pupils. The pupils then have fewer opportunities to think for themselves. For example, occasionally, teachers talk for extended periods without sufficiently checking pupils' thinking and understanding. This slows down the learning.
- Teachers' marking of pupils' work is thorough. Often, it provides a clear steer to pupils about how they can improve their work further. However, pupils do not always follow up these recommendations.
- Staff often give useful support to pupils who speak English as an additional language by focusing on particularly important words. However, the needs of these pupils are generally not well met. Too few specific activities to meet their assessed needs are arranged. Staff do not always point out when they use incorrect grammar or syntax. Thus, the mistakes are further entrenched.
- Similarly, staff do not consistently plan for the precise needs of pupils with special educational needs. Teachers and teaching assistants often do useful work in supporting these pupils to participate in the learning tasks, but without setting the right specific work to help them learn best.
- The same applies to the needs of those entitled to pupil premium funding, which are very different from the needs of other pupils, and of those who have high ability, whose needs are also not always well met.
- For example, in one year group, pupils made story maps to help them to plan their writing. All pupils benefited from a very imaginative and purposeful task, clearly explained by staff. However, opportunities were missed to develop higher-order language skills and vocabulary, and to address the particular needs of different pupils.
- Sometimes, pupils have to complete lengthy tasks which they can do easily before moving on to more challenging work. This was seen, for example, in a mathematics lesson, where pupils had to complete some straightforward sums before moving on. Some of the pupils who read to inspectors had reading books which were too easy for them.
- The school has introduced a new strategy for teaching phonics (linking letters and sounds). Pupils do not, however, always move on to new sounds quickly enough, as assessments are not consistently made in a timely way.
- The classrooms are attractive and stimulating places for the pupils to learn. Displays celebrate pupils' achievements and stimulate further learning. Some are helpfully translated into community languages.

The achievement of pupils is inadequate

- At Key Stage 1, in 2014, pupils attained standards significantly below the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. No pupils gained the above average Level 3 in any subject. In general, pupils performed two terms behind their peers nationally.
- At Key Stage 2, pupils also attained standards well below the national average. Pupils were two terms behind other pupils nationally and a year behind, on average, in writing. Very few pupils reached above average levels. Girls were on average a year behind other girls nationally in all subjects. Pupils made notably slower progress throughout Key Stage 2 than pupils nationally.
- Since September 2014, pupils have made better progress in Key Stages 1 and 2, especially in reading and mathematics. Writing seen by inspectors in pupils' books across the school shows that many pupils have made reasonable progress this year. However, standards are low and not improving quickly enough.
- From their starting points, pupils' progress across each key stage has not caught up after previous underachievement. As a result, pupils currently in Years 2 and 6 have not made the progress that they should in reading, writing and mathematics. Some improvement is expected in attainment at the end of Year 2; but the school does not expect to meet the floor standard at Year 6 in 2015.
- Significant groups within the school community underachieve, including pupils who are disadvantaged,

pupils who speak English as an additional language and those who are disabled or who have special educational needs.

- The attainment of disadvantaged pupils, who are entitled to pupil premium support, is not picking up strongly. Gaps between disadvantaged pupils in the school and other pupils nationally are not closing, and these pupils in Year 6 continue to be about two years behind in reading, writing and mathematics. Across the whole school, there are also wide gaps between disadvantaged pupils and the other pupils, of well over a year. These gaps have recently narrowed but the strategies to improve the progress of disadvantaged pupils are not ensuring they catch up quickly enough.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are not achieving as well as pupils nationally. The school's own data confirm that in some year groups these pupils make too little progress. Support for these pupils through lessons is not tightly focused on ensuring skills in reading, writing and mathematics improve quickly.
- The progress of more-able pupils is improving. However, the work set for them is not always challenging enough. Too few pupils gain the higher levels in assessments and tests.
- A change in approach to the teaching of reading has improved pupils' understanding of phonics at the end of Year 1, albeit, as the school recognises, there is further to go. Year 2 pupils who read to inspectors had reading books which were too easy for them, hindering their progress.
- Where improvement occurs, pupils think increasingly deeply about key concepts. For example, in Year 3, pupils were helpfully challenged to extend the range of fractions they could work with, and did so confidently. In Year 5, using practical apparatus supported pupils to improve their understanding of symmetry and form ideas about properties of shapes.
- Displays and work around the school, and what the pupils say, indicate that they learn productively in many subjects beyond English and mathematics. However, the school cannot yet show this clearly.

The early years provision

requires improvement

- Children begin Nursery with skills just below those typical for their age. At the end of the Reception Year in 2014, children attained less well than other children nationally. Girls did notably better than boys. Only one in five of children entitled to pupil premium funding reached a good level of development. Children's skills were significantly lower in communication and language, literacy and mathematics. As a result, children were not as well prepared for the start of Year 1 as they could have been.
- Inspectors noted some improvements for the current Reception children and the school anticipates better outcomes in 2015.
- The newly appointed leader of early years has made an effective start to improving provision. She is well supported by the deputy head of school. As a result, for example, children's ability to use language is showing improvement by giving children better opportunities to sequence and explain. In the home corner, children confidently used drawings to help put in the right order their retelling of events from their everyday lives.
- Staff provide a range of interesting activities across all areas of learning, indoors and outdoors. Adults engage actively with the children, discussing their learning. In some cases, however, staff miss opportunities to question children deeply and extend their thinking.
- While children enjoy and engage with their learning, the activities are not always focused enough on strengthening children's learning based on their assessed needs. Activities are not always specifically planned for the children involved, particularly in relation to building their early reading, writing and number skills.
- Staff do, however, helpfully adapt their teaching during activities, to support particular needs. For example, they effectively reinforce key words for children who speak little English.
- Records of children's achievement include first-hand observations and photographs which capture very helpfully their key developmental milestones. There is further work needed to strengthen the way in which these observations show the progress children make in the different areas of learning.
- Relationships are supportive between adults and children. Children show care and consideration for others in their activities. They also manage risk well. When using scissors to improve their cutting skills, for example, or using large construction equipment, children showed they know how to stay safe.
- Staff make regular contact with parents about what their children are doing and the progress they make. Translation support is made available where needed. This is at an early stage, however, and not all parents are yet involved.
- Staff know and apply the necessary measures to keep children safe from harm.

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	139254
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	449881

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	332
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Janice Brooke
Headteacher	Michelle Munns
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