

Capel Primary School

Five Oak Green Road, Tonbridge, TN12 6RP

Inspection dates 5–6 February 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

- Teaching is good because most activities are carefully planned at the right level for pupils and learning is assessed regularly. Consequently, they make good progress by the end of Key Stage 2.
- Children are given a strong start in the early years and reach good levels of development.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is well provided for. This, along with the work of their active school council, helps to prepare pupils for life in modern democratic Britain.
- Pupils speak highly of their school, behave well in class and treat each other well around the school.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe is good. Pupils feel well looked after and their parents are confident that their children are secure in the school.
- Achievement was good by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 last year. The school's records show that performance and good progress have also been sustained for pupils in other year groups.
- Governors and leaders are ambitious for the school and have made sure that pupils' behaviour and the leadership of the school have improved rapidly since the previous inspection.
- The leadership team has set clear expectations for good teaching and provides focused support for staff to improve their practice.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Not all adults are skilled in designing activities and asking questions that help pupils, particularly the most able, to deepen and widen their knowledge.
- Not all teachers are as skilled as the best in re-shaping activities in lessons to help all pupils make rapid progress.
- Pupils' behaviour has improved considerably since new policies were introduced after the previous inspection but a minority of parents do not yet accept this.
- The newly appointed middle leaders check pupils' work methodically but are not yet holding teachers to account in their respective areas of responsibility.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 13 lessons or parts of lessons taught by seven teachers. One session was observed jointly with the headteacher, who joined an inspector on two further visits to a series of lessons to check writing in Key Stage 2 and expressive arts activities across the school. The deputy headteacher joined an inspector in checking pupils' workbooks.
- Inspectors also observed pupils' activities at the breakfast club, during break and lunchtimes, and at an assembly.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils, representatives of the governing body, and school and subject leaders. Discussions took place between an inspector and a representative of the local authority.
- The inspectors took account of the 68 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View), two letters received during the inspection and a telephone call, as well as informal discussions with parents. The views of staff were taken into account through meetings and the 20 responses to the staff survey.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read and discussed their choices of reading books.
- The school's own attainment records for the previous and current academic years were scrutinised in addition to published information on pupils' achievement.
- Records relating to pupils' safety and welfare, including security checks on staff, were checked. Behaviour logs and attendance records were examined.

Inspection team

Patricia MacLachlan, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

Mary Adossides

Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Capel Primary School is smaller than the average-sized primary school
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is above average with about one in eight pupils supported for their special educational needs.
- The proportion of pupils who receive support through the pupil premium (extra money provided by the government for pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and children who are looked after by the local authority) is below the national average. Fewer than two out of 10 pupils are supported with this additional funding.
- Almost all pupils in the school are of White British heritage.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Early years provision consists of a full-time Reception class.
- The headteacher took up his post in February 2013. A permanent deputy headteacher has been appointed since the previous inspection. Middle leadership appointments for the positions of designate leader for literacy, early years leader and special educational needs coordinator were all made in September 2014.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching further from good to outstanding by:
 - training all adults to design activities that prompt pupils, particularly the most able, to think deeply and give reasoned and detailed answers to questions
 - equipping all teachers with the skills shown by the best teachers to reshape activities if necessary to help all pupils to make rapid progress
 - ensure the newly appointed middle leaders make frequent checks on the quality of teaching in the areas for which they are responsible.
- Extend the current practice of involving pupils and governors in evaluating the effectiveness of the behaviour policy to include parents by inviting them to join observations of the work of the school and formal discussions.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- Leadership and management are good because a senior team, formed after the previous inspection, has secured marked improvements in behaviour and the quality of teaching. The committed headteacher and deputy make methodical and regular observations of pupils' learning and work. This enables them to check pupils' progress frequently and consolidate the quality of teaching across the school.
- Well-organised support programmes help teachers to improve their work and quickly develop good, or better, practices. Teachers new to the profession receive effective support to reach the required standards.
- Leaders have introduced an effective and detailed scheme for pupils to respond to teachers' marking across a wide range of subjects. This has raised teachers' expectations and pupils' understanding of how to improve their own performance.
- Last year, progress for all groups at Key Stage 2 for was in line with the national performance in reading, writing and mathematics. Progress was significantly above the national average in writing for pupils whose attainment was low when they were in Key Stage 1. This shows that English and mathematics policies have had a positive impact. Spelling, punctuation and grammar outcomes were not as strong but leaders are successfully addressing this by appointing new middle leaders, including a teacher with expertise in teaching phonics (the linking of sounds to letters) to all year groups.
- Middle leaders are very new to their roles and have quickly made improvements in their areas of responsibility. Their actions have included training all staff in the use of phonics and improving the range of reading resources. They systematically check pupils' work. Pupils' progress in most year groups has consequently improved this academic year. However, middle leaders do not always hold teachers sufficiently to account for the quality of their work.
- Strong systems have been developed to make sure that only those teachers who meet the ambitious targets that are set for them move up the salary scale. The headteacher does not shy away from difficult conversations about teachers' performance when these are necessary to secure improved teaching.
- The promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils reflect on the differences between right and wrong in assemblies. Values of tolerance and democracy in British and other societies are highlighted in history and other lessons. Pupils are encouraged to listen to each other respectfully when discussing questions in class as part of the revised behaviour policy. This has brought about marked improvements in behaviour for learning.
- Stimulating art lessons that develop models made with parents and refer to the works of famous artists extend pupils' cultural horizons. Cross-school projects such as the writers' club and visiting authors also excite pupils' creativity. Social development is supported by opportunities such as the after-school café run by pupils to raise money for their school journeys. Visits from speakers of different faiths extend pupils' spiritual understanding and help to prepare them for life in modern Britain.
- The government's sports funding has been used well to engage a specialist physical education teacher, who has worked with each class teacher to improve their skills in teaching gymnastics. Pupils of all ages now experience better-quality physical education, and this has had a positive impact on their health, and enthusiasm for after-school clubs.
- The pupil premium funding to improve the attainment of disadvantaged pupils is used effectively to reduce the gaps between their attainment and that of their peers.
- Safeguarding systems meet current requirements and policies are applied consistently, so that pupils are safe and well cared for. Leaders promote equal opportunities and do not tolerate any discrimination that may arise.
- The local authority has provided support by making frequent visits to check pupils' progress and join leaders in lesson observations. This has helped leaders raise standards across the school and improve teaching and learning.
- Leaders work with other schools in the area to develop assessment arrangements for the new curriculum. The school joins with four other schools in the Tunbridge Wells and Cranbrook area to check assessment standards, moderate pupils' work and share in area-wide professional development.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Members of the regrouped and galvanised governing body know the standards of achievement and teaching in the school. This is because an external review has helped them to ask challenging questions about pupils' performance when leaders report to them. The governing body augments its questioning with focused visits to check that reported improvements are taking place.

- Governors have an accurate understanding of how pupils are performing compared with national standards because they have been trained to use the published data to compare pupils' performance.
- Governors understand the link between teachers' pay increases and pupils' progress. They are aware of what support has been provided to improve teaching and how any underperformance has been tackled.
- Governors check that the pupil premium funds are spent on the intended groups and assiduously hold school leaders to account for the impact of the expenditure on pupils' performance.
- British values of democracy and tolerance are actively promoted because governors welcome the celebration of diverse cultures. For example, they encourage former teachers from different faiths and cultures to maintain contact with the pupils and share their experiences.
- Governors are scrupulous in ensuring that safeguarding arrangements meet requirements. They manage the budget well to support the school improvement plan.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Their attitudes are very constructive. They clearly understand and accept the 'traffic light' system of behaviour management because they were involved in drawing up the policy and in evaluating its effectiveness. Their confidence in the improved behaviour was explained by pupils who said, 'We are a family and if behaviour is difficult, the adults will make sure that all children can enjoy their time at school.'
- Pupils aspire to improve their own behaviour because they discuss their reflections upon their own actions with adults. Typically, pupils conduct themselves positively around the school because they want to live up to the high expectations that are now set for them. For example, noise levels in the dining room were modulated well by the pupils themselves.
- Pupils work cooperatively with adults and each other in lessons. Behaviour is good, rather than outstanding, because some logged incidents outside the classroom, while neither recent nor repeated, have needed firm interventions by senior staff. Pupils take pride in their well-decorated classrooms that celebrate their work in vivid displays and they treat their environment with respect.
- Attendance rates are in line with national averages. Effective checking and following up absence with parents has helped to improve attendance among the small groups that have found regular attendance difficult in the past. Behaviour management is effective and exclusions are not necessary. The breakfast club provides a healthy, punctual start to the day.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. A typical comment from pupils is that all adults are very approachable and helpful. Pupils trust that their concerns will be addressed and speak of how safe they feel in the school. Pupils are adamant that bullying is rare and that, if an incident does arise, 'It is dealt with quickly by the teachers.' This is borne out by school records.
- Pupils have a very strong awareness of personal safety, including when using the internet, because visiting police officers explain this well. Pupils understand and can explain the importance of cyber safety habits.
- The school keeps a close eye on pupils' concerns by using and responding to regular pupil surveys. In addition, governors make regular visits to check that pupils feel safe. In surveys, staff are also unanimous in expressing that behaviour is well managed in the school.
- The parents who responded to Parent View are overwhelmingly happy that their children are safe in school and that the school provides a safe and caring environment. However, unlike the pupils and staff, a minority of parents disagree that behaviour is well managed. Consequently, school leaders and governors have made plans to explore further with parents whether or not this view is based on past events.

The quality of teaching is good

- A key feature of the good teaching in this school is that warm relationships are established between all adults and pupils in the classroom. Consequently, pupils are confident enough to involve themselves and offer answers to their teachers and teaching assistants.
- For example, pupils in Year 5 were very engaged in dialogue writing because they had begun by sharing musical rhythms and dramatic speeches to enliven an extract from *Macbeth*. Building on these activities,

the teachers' challenging questions prompted recognition of the use of alliteration, emotive phrases and superlatives to enrich their proposed scripts. This helped the pupils to make good progress and draft high-quality writing that they were able to evaluate with their partners. However, teachers' questioning is not always as skilful in promoting detailed responses and rapid progress in other year groups.

- Activities in mathematics are usually designed well to help pupils to apply their skills to practical problems. There is an emphasis on pupils discussing and explaining their answers in order to expand their understanding of chosen methods. Teachers provide good guidance to pupils in mathematics through methodical marking. Some teachers now routinely set aside time for pupils to improve their answers and track their own successes in their books.
- Teachers mark pupils' English and mathematics work regularly and this helps to improve their progress by noting helpful advice for correcting their work. The teachers' marking of writing in other subjects and in homework projects is also usually helpful. However, in subjects such as history and religious education, teachers do not give as much time as in English for pupils to respond and correct their work thoroughly.
- Diligent teaching assistants plan carefully with class teachers and give sensitive and effective support to pupils who need additional help to complete tasks.
- Teachers plan interesting activities set at the right level of difficulty for most pupils so that they make good progress. However, sometimes, activities do not challenge the most-able pupils sufficiently because they do not always have time to complete the additional work that has been set for them. As a result, these pupils do not always achieve the highest levels of which they are capable.
- The school draws upon the expertise of the head of computing and sixth formers from a local independent school to support improved achievement and teaching in technical subjects for Key Stage 2 pupils.
- Teachers promote reading well across all year groups. Leaders have reorganised the resources in classrooms so that time is available for reading in lessons. Younger pupils' progress in reading is recorded frequently by teachers and other adults who hear them read so that it can be checked against national expectations. Groups have been organised for pupils in lower Key Stage 2 who need additional help to catch up.

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Pupils make good progress from their strong start in the early years. Last year, they achieved well in reading and writing by the end of Key Stage 1, attaining standards significantly above the national average. Outcomes in mathematics have risen to exceed the national average.
- Pupils had, by the end of Year 6, attained outcomes that were above national average at Level 5 in writing and rates of progress had improved upon previous years in reading and mathematics. Pupils' performance in the spelling, punctuation and grammar tests was well below the national average, but leaders have established the reasons for this and changed the way these skills are taught. The recent work seen in books by inspectors confirms that writing is increasingly accurate.
- In addition to improving achievement by the end of Year 6 last year, the school's records show that pupils are on track to make good progress, across the Key Stage 2 year groups. In some cases, accelerated progress was recorded last term because the school's tracking systems are very focused and effective strategies are devised for any pupils who are at risk of falling behind.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make broadly the same progress as their classmates. This is particularly evident in Key Stage 2 because of well-planned extra support that they receive that matches activities to the pupils' needs.
- The performance of the most-able pupils in 2014 was in line with their peers nationally. Of the pupils currently on roll in Key Stage 2 who attained Level 3 at the end of Year 2, progress has been particularly strong in Year 5 and Year 6 but more mixed in the younger year groups. Leaders recognise that this is because teachers did not always give sufficiently challenging work in the past to enable the most able to do well enough in a wide range of subjects. Scrutiny of this year's most recent data and the workbooks of the most-able pupils show that this picture is beginning to improve as a result of more challenging activities in mathematics and English.
- Additional government funding to support disadvantaged pupils is used effectively to provide additional activities in reading, writing and mathematics. Governors regularly check the impact of this spending on pupils' performance. In 2014, the attainment of disadvantaged pupils in Year 6 was almost in line with their classmates in mathematics and about half a term ahead of pupils nationally. In reading and writing, the disadvantaged were four to six months behind pupils nationally and six months behind their classmates. The disadvantaged pupils in the current Year 5, the year group with the largest number of

pupils in this category, have closed the attainment gap, and overtaken their peers in reading and writing, and are about four months behind their classmates in mathematics.

The early years provision

is good

- Children joining the school in the early years usually have skills and levels of understanding typical of their ages. As a result of good teaching, achievement by the end of the Reception Year is well above that typically found in schools nationally. Children are well prepared to begin Year 1.
- Both indoor and outdoor Reception classrooms provide a secure and stimulating learning environment. Children respond by behaving well and learning enthusiastically.
- Staff plan carefully to help children make good progress through a range of exciting activities. Their progress is carefully recorded and leaders make sure that any children who may need additional help receive very effective support.
- Leadership and management of the early years provision are good because the newly appointed leader has a clear understanding of the strengths and areas for development. For example, the leader is aware that not all staff in Reception are asking questions that prompt the children to make reasoned and extended explanations. Plans are in hand to provide training to improve upon this.
- A varied curriculum gives children experiences that help their development across a wide range of areas. Links have been established with nurseries so that children are equally well prepared to move into Reception and on to Year 1.

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	118271
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	453646

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	201
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Pete Bamford
Headteacher	Christopher Taylor
Date of previous school inspection	7–8 February 2013
Telephone number	01892 833919
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