

Reculver Church of England Primary School

Hillborough, Herne Bay, Kent CT6 6TA

Inspection dates

3–4 July 2018

Overall effectiveness	Outstanding
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Outstanding
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Outstanding
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Outstanding
Outcomes for pupils	Outstanding
Early years provision	Outstanding
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school

- The headteacher has been steadfast in raising standards since her appointment. She has ensured that governors and staff have shared her high expectations. This has resulted in high standards across the school.
- Teachers have excellent subject knowledge. They inspire pupils by planning challenging activities, particularly for disadvantaged pupils. Consequently, pupils make excellent progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Governors provide a high level of challenge to school leaders. Governors see themselves as being part of the school 'family' and they are relentless in pursuing high standards.
- The curriculum inspires pupils to deepen their understanding in a wide range of subjects.
- Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. Pupils listen carefully to teachers, are well prepared for their lessons and have excellent attitudes to learning.
- Children in the early years make outstanding progress because of high-quality provision.
- Staff prioritise pupils' personal development and welfare. This creates an inclusive environment in which pupils thrive.
- The Diocese of Canterbury Academies Trust (Aquila) provides very effective support, particularly in staff training.
- Boys' writing, particularly in Year 1, is not as well developed as reading and mathematics. Leaders are aware of this and are taking appropriate action.
- Disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities make strong progress, particularly in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Parents support leaders and appreciate the effective changes they have made over the past three years. They value the first-rate care their children receive.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Continue to improve boys' writing, particularly in Year 1, so that boys make strong progress and attain well.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Outstanding

- The headteacher is very ambitious for all pupils and has extremely high expectations. These high expectations are shared by leaders at all levels. The headteacher has overseen swift and effective improvements since her appointment. These improvements have resulted in pupils making very strong progress across all areas of the curriculum.
- Leaders, staff and governors work closely together to set pertinent priorities for improvement. As a result, there is a shared understanding of what needs to be done and a shared insistence on the highest standards in teaching, behaviour and expectations. One staff member commented that 'this is a school with momentum'.
- The headteacher has created a culture where high-quality teaching challenges and stretches all pupils. Leaders are dedicated to continuous improvement. All staff are challenged to be highly ambitious and reflective. They have the freedom to learn from others within and beyond the Diocese of Canterbury Academies Trust to provide the best education for pupils. One member of staff commented that 'innovation is encouraged'.
- Training for teachers is relevant, individualised and ably supported by the trust. Helpfully, teachers can choose the training that they think would be most useful for them. New staff are inducted into the school very skilfully. They are quickly supported to reach the high standards that are expected of them.
- The trust provides very effective support for leaders and staff. It invests in a range of leadership training that helps staff to improve in their current leadership roles or to design and carry out research projects in school. As a result, leaders feel well supported.
- Pupils are very well prepared for life in modern Britain. Leaders ensure that the curriculum provides extensive coverage of fundamental British values. For example, pupils have various opportunities to participate in democratic processes. These include joining the school council and participating in the local schools' parliament. As a result, pupils' knowledge and understanding of British values are well developed.
- Leaders prioritise staff well-being. Each member of staff benefits from very effective support from their colleagues which focuses on improving teaching and supporting staff welfare. Almost all staff who responded to the online Ofsted questionnaire felt that leaders are considerate of their well-being.
- Staff know their pupils exceptionally well. Precise assessment systems mean that leaders use information on pupils' progress well to decide where further support is needed for pupils who fall behind. Similarly, pupils are extremely well cared for because staff know the challenges that pupils face and are always on hand to provide support or guidance.
- Parents appreciate the changes that leaders have made that have resulted in substantial improvements in teaching and pupils' progress. One parent, who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, wrote, 'Since the school's new leadership has been in place the school has made remarkable improvements. My children are well

cared for and are making excellent progress.' A small number of parents expressed dissatisfaction, particularly with communication from the school.

- Leaders ensure that the primary school sport premium is used effectively to increase the range of activities available to pupils. Participation in after-school sporting activities is high and pupils regularly compete in inter-school competitions.

Governance of the school

- Governors have a very precise and accurate understanding of the school. They understand the school's strengths and its relative weaknesses. Governors are passionate and dedicated. They demand high standards and relentlessly seek to promote further improvement.
- Governors make effective use of school visits to monitor the impact of leaders' actions on the quality of education. Governors use well-planned opportunities to gather information about the school. Their sharply focused monitoring activities ensure that the information they receive from leaders is accurate.
- Governors rigorously challenge leaders. They use well-informed questioning to highlight areas that could further improve and others that deserve celebrating. Governors also provide useful support to leaders.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Checks for ensuring the suitability of staff are well embedded. These arrangements are regularly checked by governors. This adds to the collective responsibility felt by all members of the school to ensure that all pupils are safe.
- Staff training in safeguarding is frequent and appropriate. Leaders make sure that there are regular, effective updates in training. Staff are vigilant in making sure that pupils are safe.
- Staff have an in-depth knowledge of their pupils. Staff are aware of how to report any concerns that they may have. These concerns are acted upon swiftly by safeguarding leaders, who keep precise records of actions. When referrals to external agencies are necessary, staff ensure that meticulous records are kept so that the effectiveness of actions can be monitored.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Outstanding

- Teachers' strong subject knowledge, high expectations and precise planning provide pupils with interesting and challenging activities. Pupils are inspired by very effective teaching to be resilient learners who have a thirst for knowledge.
- Teachers use pupil-progress information very well. School assessment systems are used consistently. Teachers are very skilful in using the school's approach to planning so that activities stretch pupils at all ability levels. Consequently, pupils make substantial progress in reading, writing and mathematics.

- A broad range of subjects is taught very effectively in all year groups. Pupils systematically develop their knowledge, skills and understanding in a variety of subjects. For example, in science, pupils develop high-quality reasoning skills by conducting experiments and using their knowledge of scientific theories to form conclusions.
- Teachers know their pupils very well. Teachers ensure that disadvantaged pupils are ably supported so that they do not fall behind. Teachers also ensure that the most able are regularly challenged to reach and exceed high targets.
- By asking very effective questions, teachers challenge pupils to think deeply about complicated subjects. As a result, progress is strong across all year groups.
- Teachers ensure that pupils' writing skills are very well developed in most year groups and across most subjects. Teachers show pupils how to write well in key stage 1. This gives confidence to pupils so that they can quickly develop composition skills. However, boys' handwriting, particularly in Year 1, is not as well developed as reading and mathematics. Leaders are aware of this and have made sure that improving boys' writing is a key priority in the school's improvement plans.
- Pupils are prepared very well for the next stage of their education. In key stage 1, teachers ensure that pupils develop resilient attitudes to learning. As a result, they are very well prepared to continue into key stage 2.
- Teachers ensure that pupils thrive on opportunities to develop reading, writing and mathematical skills in a wide range of subjects. For example, in religious education, pupils in Year 2 wrote about Hinduism on a geometric shape.
- Teachers' use of homework to reinforce and extend pupils' learning is highly effective. Pupils are encouraged, particularly in key stage 1, to complete homework with family members or friends. As a result, homework helps pupils deepen their understanding and develop their social and emotional skills.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Pupils are confident and self-assured. They readily participate in all areas of school life. The school's impressive work to promote fundamental British values means that pupils show high levels of respect and tolerance towards each other and towards staff.
- An inclusive ethos permeates the school. All pupils, including those registered in the specially resourced provision, participate in interesting activities inside and outside of the classroom. Leaders ensure that adjustments are made for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities if there are any barriers that may prevent their full inclusion. This adds to the school's atmosphere of inclusion and equality.
- Pupils feel safe and they know who to go to if they have concerns. Regular visits from outside speakers in assemblies mean that pupils are very aware of how to stay safe online. The school's 'safer internet day' allowed pupils to explore the risks present while using the internet and how to remain safe from them.

- Pupils benefit from a wide variety of leadership opportunities. Pupil prefects develop a keen sense of responsibility by monitoring behaviour around the school and in assemblies. They provide thoughtful feedback to teachers on pupils' conduct. Pupils told inspectors that they are very appreciative of these opportunities.
- Pupils have an excellent understanding of social, emotional, moral and cultural issues. For example, pupils in all year groups learn about authors from different parts of the world. Stunning displays in corridors and classrooms further reinforce pupils' understanding.
- Leaders ensure that careers education is a feature in Years 5 and 6. Regular visiting speakers from local businesses and universities inform pupils about possible options open to them in later life. Consequently, pupils are very well prepared for secondary school and for making informed choices when they are older.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Pupils' conduct is exceptional. They walk around school calmly and purposefully. Pupils are well prepared for learning and they wait patiently before lessons begin.
- Behaviour in lessons is very positive. Pupils pay attention to their teachers. Teachers' effective use of the school's behaviour policy and well-planned activities ensure that pupils develop extremely positive attitudes to learning. One parent reported that her children 'have a love of learning that has been forged by the staff at Reculver'.
- Pupils show excellent manners and greet visitors warmly. Pupils are keen to talk to visitors and speak confidently about their learning.
- Pupils' attendance is above average for primary schools. The number of pupils who regularly miss school is average compared to other primary schools nationally. Because the school has a high proportion of pupils with medical needs, there are a small number of pupils who miss school regularly. However, the strong pastoral support ensures that those pupils are ably supported when they return to school.

Outcomes for pupils

Outstanding

- Across a wide range of subjects, pupils make very strong progress in developing their knowledge, skills and understanding. Pupils' books show that they make sustained and substantial progress over time. Consistently high expectations from teachers and outstanding teaching in subjects such as history, religious education and science ensure that pupils' progress is rapid.
- Pupils' progress in 2017, by the end of key stage 2, in reading, writing and mathematics was above average. Leaders have been resolute in ensuring that outcomes have improved further in 2018.
- Leaders' information shows that current pupils are making increasingly strong progress and attaining at high levels. The proportion of current pupils achieving higher standards in reading and mathematics in Year 6 is well above the most recent national averages because of the high expectations of staff and very effective teaching. In

writing, the proportion of current pupils achieving higher standards is the same as others nationally in recent years.

- Disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities make strong progress in reading, writing and mathematics in all year groups. This is because well-trained staff provide high-quality pastoral support and precisely-planned activities that meet the needs of disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities exceedingly well. In 2017, disadvantaged pupils' progress across key stage 2 in reading, writing and mathematics was above average.
- In almost all year groups, the proportion of pupils reaching age-related expectations in reading, writing and mathematics is very high. In Year 4, the proportion of pupils doing so is not as high as in other year groups. However, this reflects the lower starting points of this group, rather than that their progress is any slower than other pupils.
- In key stage 1, pupils develop reading skills very well. Consequently, an above-average proportion of pupils meet the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check. Staff promote positive reading habits very well so that reading becomes a frequent and enjoyable part of school life.

Early years provision

Outstanding

- Leaders, teachers and teaching assistants in the early years are extremely dedicated to ensuring that children get the best start. Children thrive in the early years and make rapid progress. They are very well prepared to start key stage 1.
- Children make rapid progress because of excellent teaching based on accurate assessment of their needs by staff. Teachers meticulously plan activities that challenge and interest children. As a result, children quickly develop their skills, particularly in language and communication.
- The school provides children with a safe learning environment. Staff receive appropriate and effective safety training. Children are very well cared for. Staff supervision is effective in providing a safe and nurturing environment.
- Children play well together. They show respect towards each other and have impeccable manners. The school's values, beliefs and attitudes contribute significantly to the success of early years provision. Children learn to develop resilience and perseverance because of outstanding teaching.
- Children's personal and academic development is outstanding. They independently explore the outside and indoor classrooms where they have a rich choice of activities. Teachers plan a carefully balanced combination of activities, including some that children can choose for themselves and some tasks that are directed by teachers. Children are confident in asking for help from staff when they need support.
- Very effective teaching in phonics means that children quickly develop age-appropriate reading skills.
- Parents appreciate the high-quality teaching and expert care that their children receive in early years. One parent wrote that her daughter 'is making excellent progress and is very happy and secure', adding that 'the school's inclusivity is second to none.'

School details

Unique reference number	141216
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10046589

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	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	466
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Mr Alan Rogers
Headteacher	Mrs Jenny Ashley-Jones
Telephone number	01227 375907
Website	www.reculver.kent.sch.uk
Email address	administration@reculver.kent.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Reculver Church of England Primary School became an academy in August 2017. The school is part of the Diocese of Canterbury Academies Trust.
- The trust has worked with school leaders to provide strategic direction to improve the school. The trust delegates aspects of governance to the local governing body. The board of trustees is the accountable body for all schools in the Diocese of Canterbury Academies Trust. The chief executive officer chairs the board of trustees.
- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The large majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils who are disadvantaged is below the national average for primary schools.

- The school has a specially resourced provision for pupils who have a visual impairment and/or severe learning difficulty. For most of their time, these pupils are taught in mainstream classes.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in 41 lessons. In several observations, senior leaders joined inspectors.
- Inspectors held meetings with senior leaders, the headteacher, the chief executive officer of the trust and governors.
- Inspectors met formally with groups of pupils from key stages 1 and 2. Their views from surveys were considered. Inspectors also spoke to a wide range of pupils during social times and during lessons.
- Inspectors looked at samples of pupils' work and observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around school.
- Inspectors considered the views of staff by meeting with groups of them and through analysing 44 responses to the confidential questionnaire.
- Inspectors considered the views of 139 parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including 111 free-text responses.
- Documentation was scrutinised by inspectors including the school's plans for improvement, school self-evaluation, reports on attendance and behaviour, records relating to pupils' safety, minutes of governors' meetings and information on pupils' outcomes.

Inspection team

Harry Ingham, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Ross Macdonald	Ofsted Inspector
Keith Pullen	Ofsted Inspector

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