

West Kingsdown Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Fawkham Road, West Kingsdown, Sevenoaks, Kent TN15 6JP

Inspection dates

13–14 November 2018

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The headteacher has established a positive ethos. Pupils respect each other's differences and achieve well. They are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- Leaders at all levels have improved the quality of teaching through thorough and effective monitoring and support. Teaching is now consistently good.
- Pupils' outcomes throughout the school have improved. By the end of key stage 2, above average proportions achieve the expected standards in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) make good progress. Disadvantaged pupils achieve standards in line with or above other pupils nationally.
- Pupils' welfare and safety have a high priority. Pupils are happy, safe and cared for as a result of the positive relationships they have with each other and with adults in school.
- Leadership of the early years has ensured that standards have risen. Exciting, well-planned activities help children learn well across the full range of the early years curriculum.
- Pupils' behaviour is much improved and is now good. Most pupils attend school regularly. Leaders work effectively to improve the attendance of those pupils who are persistently absent.
- Governors' strategic oversight of the quality of education is much more rigorous than in the past and has contributed positively to the school's improvement. However, some of their work needs to be strengthened, particularly checks on the administration of safeguarding.
- The progress of the most able pupils in mathematics does not match the strong progress they make in reading and writing. Leaders' work to refine levels of challenge in mathematics is ongoing.
- Pupils enjoy learning across the whole curriculum. However, they do not develop strong-enough knowledge and skills in subjects other than English and mathematics.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Fully embed improvements in the teaching of mathematics, especially for the most able pupils, so that a greater proportion achieve the higher standard in mathematics.
- Continue to develop teaching and learning in foundation subjects so that pupils acquire strong subject-specific knowledge and skills across the whole curriculum.
- Ensure that the administration of safeguarding reflects the strong safeguarding culture evident in the school.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher leads a united team whose members have worked together diligently to deliver effective school improvement. The headteacher's quietly determined approach is valued by staff and parents and carers alike. As one parent said: 'The dedication of the school's leadership is clear and consistent. Every effort is made to engage all pupils and strive for good results.' Another praised the headteacher by saying: 'She is approachable, knows all the pupils and parents well, and deals with any issues quickly. Nothing is ever too much.'
- Since the last inspection, leaders have improved the accuracy of their self-evaluation. Regular and thorough monitoring, based on a broad range of evidence, has allowed leaders to recognise the school's relative weaknesses as well as its strengths. This has enabled leaders to tackle successfully those aspects of the school needing further development.
- Leaders have, rightly, prioritised raising the quality of teaching and learning. Staff have developed an open culture in which they learn from each other's best practice. They actively seek specific training and examples of highly effective teaching, both within the school and through partnerships with local schools. The high-quality monitoring and support from middle leaders help teachers to refine their practice. As a result, teaching and learning are now consistently good, and pupils' outcomes in all year groups are much improved.
- The local authority and diocese have supported the school well to make improvements in the quality of provision. The advice and guidance they have provided have helped to raise standards.
- All staff who expressed an opinion feel proud to work at West Kingsdown. They recognise the improvements that have been made since the last inspection. They feel well supported by leaders, valuing the training that has helped improve the quality of teaching and the approach of leaders to ensure that staff maintain a healthy work-life balance.
- Leaders use additional funding to support the needs of disadvantaged pupils effectively. Provision for these pupils is carefully planned to meet their individual learning and emotional needs in a timely and effective way. As a result, disadvantaged pupils make good progress over time to achieve in line with, or above, other pupils nationally.
- Leaders ensure that pupils with SEND are supported very well throughout the school. Staff receive effective training so that they are able to meet the different needs of these pupils well. Leaders evaluate the impact of teaching strategies in a timely manner, making useful adjustments to provision where necessary. This ensures that pupils with SEND make strong progress across the school.
- The primary physical education and sport premium is used effectively to improve teachers' skills and increase pupils' participation in physical activity. Pupils enjoy using sporting equipment at breaktimes. An increasing range of extra-curricular sporting activities are available and well attended.

- The curriculum provides frequent opportunities for pupils to develop key skills, which have resulted in their much-improved outcomes in reading, writing and mathematics. Leaders have recently begun to improve the wider curriculum by providing learning opportunities that interest and excite pupils and fuel their appetite for learning. Wisely, leaders have planned further development of the curriculum to ensure that pupils develop secure subject-specific knowledge and skills in subjects other than English and mathematics.
- Leaders' work to make sure that pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain is effective. Opportunities to develop an understanding of British and Christian values are threaded through the curriculum well. There are a few opportunities for pupils to learn directly about the multicultural nature of Britain. For example, last term, pupils welcomed a speaker from the Caribbean who talked about her experiences of living in Britain. However, further opportunities to develop pupils' first-hand understanding of this aspect of British values would be beneficial.
- The curriculum provides well for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils gain an understanding of the world's main religions in religious education and benefit from a range of extra-curricular trips and clubs, which help to broaden their experiences. For example, during the inspection, pupils in Year 3 visited Trosley Country Park where they enjoyed learning woodland crafts.

Governance of the school

- Governance is much improved since the previous inspection. Governors take their responsibilities very seriously. They are now rigorous and highly effective in holding leaders to account for the quality of teaching and learning, pupils' behaviour and outcomes.
- Regular and thorough monitoring visits to the school ensure that governors are well informed about the impact of leaders' actions. They check the use of additional funding carefully, asking demanding questions about its impact on pupils' outcomes.
- Although governors are mindful of their statutory responsibilities, they have not acted swiftly enough to reorganise their work following some recent changes in the governing body's membership. For example, the school's website was not quite up to date at the start of the inspection.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The school has a strong culture of safeguarding. Staff receive regular training and are fully aware of the latest government advice. They understand the factors which might make a pupil vulnerable. Staff adopt an 'it could happen here' approach which ensures that they are vigilant around all aspects of pupils' safety and care. Leaders respond quickly when a safeguarding concern is raised. They have effective links with external agencies, which help to keep pupils safe.
- Record-keeping has been much improved since the previous inspection. Staff have a thorough understanding of how to report any concerns and are aware of the need to

report minor issues as they may serve to complete the picture of a much broader concern.

- Pupils feel safe in school. They know to tell the 'stay-safe team' of adults if they need any help or advice. They know their concerns will be listened to. The curriculum includes opportunities for pupils to develop a keen awareness of how to keep themselves safe. They value visits from agencies such as the police and the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, which inform them about how to stay safe in their community, including when online.
- Leaders and governors carry out the right recruitment checks on adults who work in the school. Procedures, such as ensuring that all visitors are accompanied while on site, help to keep pupils safe.
- Governors' oversight of the administration of safeguarding is not as strong as it should be. Leaders check that staff understand their responsibilities for safeguarding and that pupils are kept safe. They have also overseen improvements to site security. However, during the inspection, some minor administrative changes needed to be made, for example, to ensure that the single central record is maintained accurately.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- The quality of teaching is good and improving. Teachers' enthusiastic approach harnesses pupils' eagerness to learn. Positive relationships between pupils and staff, and between pupils themselves, underpin an industrious culture in which pupils work hard to achieve well.
- Teachers use a range of strategies to assess pupils' knowledge and understanding. For example, they use questions to clarify pupils' understanding and to skilfully address any misconceptions. Teachers' use of assessment information is much improved and typically used well to identify pupils' different starting points and to plan future learning.
- Disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND are taught well. Teachers and teaching assistants use their accurate understanding of what pupils know, understand and can do to provide high-quality support and additional teaching. Pupils value this help and encouragement, which enable them to make good progress from their different starting points.
- Teachers plan learning which develops pupils' literacy skills well. Children learn phonics as soon as they start school. Staff model the sounds accurately and use words and phrases that children understand to help reinforce their learning. For example, children distinguish between 'stretchy' and 'bouncy' sounds and this helps them to pronounce them accurately. The effective teaching of phonics helps pupils to get off to a good start in reading and writing.
- Pupils' reading and writing skills progress steadily as they move up the school. Teachers' raised expectations of what pupils can achieve, coupled with a consistent teaching approach throughout the school, result in higher standards of achievement for pupils in key stages 1 and 2. In reading, teachers' carefully thought-through questions encourage pupils to think deeply about the context and characters in the texts they are

studying. In writing, pupils are supported well to discover new vocabulary and to test out more sophisticated sentence structures and punctuation.

- Teaching in mathematics is much improved. Pupils use equipment which helps them to understand the practical application of the mathematics they are learning. Increasingly, pupils throughout the school are given the opportunity to develop their reasoning and problem-solving skills. As a result, pupils' achievement has risen over time. However, the choice and design of activities to stretch the most able pupils in mathematics needs further refining.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Leaders make sure that pupils' welfare is a high priority. Adults are alert to any issues that may make a pupil feel vulnerable. They choose carefully from a range of strategies to support pupils' different emotional and social needs. As a result, pupils thrive in the happy and nurturing environment of West Kingsdown.
- Pupils develop in confidence and resilience as they progress through the school. In the early years, children learn to take risks safely, for example when using large building blocks to create potentially unstable structures. Older pupils work cooperatively to test out ideas and improve their understanding. They tackle challenging work with a positive attitude, knowing that they will be supported well by adults should they need help. Leaders are rightly prioritising the further development of pupils' resilience.
- Pupils have a highly developed understanding of the principles underpinning equality and demonstrate respect for others. They are very clear that respect is at the heart of the school's values, saying, 'that's what makes our school happy'. Consequently, bullying is rare, because pupils are considerate towards each other. Pupils are confident that, should anyone fall out, an adult will help to sort out their differences. Parents agree.
- Pupils value the opportunities to develop their leadership skills. For example, in the school council, pupils make decisions about which charities to support. Eco council members ensure that the lights in classrooms are turned off, when rooms are not in use, and that pupils use their recycling bins properly.
- Pupils develop a good understanding of how to stay healthy. The eco council runs a successful 'healthy tuck shop' where pupils can choose healthy snacks to eat at breaktime. Pupils appreciate the increasing range of sporting activities available to them, including rounders, netball and swimming. The active 'learning-outdoor days' are greatly enjoyed, as pupils relish the different learning opportunities and state, 'we get to interact with each other'.
- The breakfast club gives pupils who attend a good start to the day. Pupils enjoy happy and safe relationships, a good breakfast and a range of interesting activities.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils' behaviour around the school and in lessons is much improved, so that pupils are usually well behaved. Pupils value the new rewards system, which encourages them to do their best. Occasionally, for example when activities are not well managed or where teaching is not challenging enough, some pupils struggle to maintain their concentration. Typically, adults are able to refocus pupils' attention so that their learning is not interrupted.
- Incidents of poor behaviour are increasingly rare. Leaders' well-kept records allow them to track patterns and to intervene to support pupils who need extra help to maintain good behaviour. As a result, the school's use of fixed-term exclusion has decreased.
- Attendance declined slightly after the last inspection. Leaders responded effectively to this dip by identifying the reasons and putting in place a range of effective rewards and sanctions to encourage good attendance. These are working, as the overall attendance rate is improving.
- Leaders are working well to improve the attendance of the small group of pupils who continue to be persistently absent. Work with pupils and their families is starting to make a positive difference and, consequently, fewer pupils are persistently absent.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Outcomes have improved since the previous inspection. In 2017, pupils' progress in key stage 2 was well above that seen nationally in reading, writing and mathematics. In 2018, pupils made the same rate of progress as pupils nationally. The proportions of pupils achieving the expected standards in reading and writing and mathematics have shown year-on-year improvement and have been above the national averages in recent years. Consequently, pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- Disadvantaged pupils make good progress. In 2018, their progress was in line with other pupils nationally at the end of key stage 2. Their attainment was also in line with other pupils nationally, including at the higher standards. A greater proportion of disadvantaged pupils achieved the greater-depth standard in writing than other pupils in school and nationally. Disadvantaged pupils achieve similar standards to others nationally at the end of key stage 1.
- In 2018, all pupils in Year 6 achieved the expected standard in mathematics. However, the proportion of pupils who achieved the higher standard in mathematics was below the national figure. This is because the most able pupils made weaker progress than pupils with similar starting points nationally.
- In 2018, attainment at the end of key stage 1 also improved, rising above the national average in reading and writing and mathematics. The proportions of pupils who attained the greater depth standards in these subjects were in line with the national average and showed an improvement on the 2017 reading outcomes.

- The Year 1 phonics screening check outcomes have been variable in recent years but, in 2018, they improved to be broadly in line with the national average. By the time pupils leave key stage 1, almost all have achieved the expected standard.
- Pupils currently in the school make good progress from their various starting points, including pupils with SEND. In writing, teachers use accurate assessments of pupils' learning to plan work that meets their needs and is appropriately challenging. Pupils who need help receive carefully planned support. Leaders are aware that there is some slight variability in pupils' outcomes in reading and writing but have evidence to show that they are working successfully to address this and secure improvement.
- Pupils enjoy reading throughout the school. Adults help pupils to learn to read well, liaising effectively with parents to ensure that all read regularly at home. Pupils read fluently and with expression when reading in class or one to one with an adult.
- In mathematics, most pupils are making good progress. There is some variability in the proportion of pupils who are on track to achieve the higher standard. Consequently, teachers are refining their approaches to providing challenge for the most able pupils.
- Pupils' progress in acquiring skills and knowledge in the foundation subjects is not as advanced as in English and mathematics. Work to improve this aspect of pupils' outcomes is already underway.

Early years provision

Good

- A highly experienced and expert teacher was appointed to lead the early years, at the start of the summer term in 2017. This leader has made rapid improvements to the quality of provision, transforming it so that it is now good. She shows a clear understanding of its current strengths and where further improvements might be made. Together with teaching assistants, she knows children well and holds high expectations for what children can achieve.
- Children who are vulnerable or disadvantaged have their needs met well. Staff show great care and kindness, assess any barriers to learning accurately and help children and their families to overcome them. As a result, children who are disadvantaged make good progress, some from very low starting points.
- Children make good progress in the early years. An above-average proportion of children reach a good level of development. Children currently in school have got off to a good start and are making strong progress.
- Staff are vigilant and ensure that children are kept safe. Risks are managed well. All statutory requirements are securely in place and safeguarding is effective.
- Early years adults have a very clear understanding of children's learning, because they draw their evidence from a wide range of sources, including information from parents. Staff use their careful assessments to plan future learning which allows children to develop their skills across the whole curriculum and challenges children to achieve well.
- Staff plan an exciting range of activities for children's learning, both inside and outside. Activities engage children's interests and help them to sustain their concentration and play happily together. Children get along well and learn to co-operate, taking turns and developing patience.

- The school's wildlife area is put to good use. An inspector joined children who were on the lookout for bugs and insects, and watched as children rehearsed a poem based on the book 'We're Going on a Bear Hunt.' Such activities provide children with shared experiences that fuel conversations and help them to develop good social and communication skills, including early reading and writing skills.
- Children enjoy learning, behave well and seize the many learning opportunities that staff present them with. The effective induction process and staff's high expectations help children to understand quickly the rules of the school and to take responsibility for their own choices.
- Staff work well with parents and strive to help them feel fully involved in their children's learning. Carefully thought-through liaison with parents, before children join the school, means that staff know children's strengths, interests and any challenges they face right from the start. Regular communication allows staff and parents to share evidence of children's learning at home and at school, and contributes to children's good progress.
- Adults in the early years share key information about children's welfare, abilities and skills with Year 1 teachers. This ensures that staff in key stage 1 are able to help children build on the strong start they receive in early years and achieve well in Year 1.
- The early years leader ensures that teaching assistants are well equipped to help children learn and to keep them safe. She offers helpful advice in how best to work with individual children and how to structure activities so children learn well.
- Teaching assistants reflect on their practice regularly. They also learn from examples of strong practice observed during visits to other schools. Leaders are, rightly, focused on ensuring that teaching assistants use their questioning skills well. Developing this aspect is helping children to make the most of their play and is enriching activities, enabling children to make stronger progress.

School details

Unique reference number	130948
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10053218

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 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	143
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Hilary Wilder
Headteacher	Mrs Sonia Phillips
Telephone number	01474853484
Website	www.west-kingsdown.kent.sch.uk
Email address	headteacher@west-kingsdown.kent.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	24–25 May 2016

Information about this school

- Since the last inspection, a new chair of governors has been appointed. In July 2017, the deputy headteacher left to become headteacher of another school. Her responsibilities have been distributed among other members of the senior leadership team.
- The school is a smaller-than-average-sized primary school.
- This voluntary controlled Church of England primary school's last section 48 inspection was carried out in June 2015.
- The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage. A very small proportion of pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is approximately half the national average.

- The proportion of pupils with SEND is broadly average, as is the proportion with an education, health and care plan.
- The school runs a breakfast club.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in all classes. Some visits were conducted jointly with senior leaders.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read, looked at their work in books and discussed pupils' progress and attainment with leaders.
- Inspectors observed pupils playing in the playground. They took account of pupils' views by reviewing 93 responses to Ofsted's online pupil survey, talking to pupils informally in lessons and meeting more formally with two groups of pupils.
- Parents' views were gathered from informal discussions at the start of the day, a letter sent to the lead inspector and 54 responses to Ofsted's online survey Parent View, including 21 free-text comments.
- Inspectors held meetings with senior leaders, other staff, governors and representatives from the diocese and the local authority. Inspectors considered 12 responses to Ofsted's online staff survey.
- Inspectors examined the school's website and scrutinised a range of the school's documentation, including: the school's self-evaluation and improvement plans; minutes of the governing body's meetings; monitoring records; policies; pupils' performance information; and records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.

Inspection team

Catherine Old, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Bruce Waelend

Ofsted Inspector

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In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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