

# Warden House Primary School

Birdwood Avenue, Deal, Kent CT14 9SF

**Inspection dates** 8–9 November 2012

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	<b>Requires improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- The proportion of good teaching is not yet high enough to ensure that pupils' learning is consistently good.
- While pupils' progress in mathematics has improved, it has not been sufficiently rapid to compensate for past underperformance in this subject.
- The standards reached by disabled pupils or those with special educational needs are generally lower than those of similar pupils nationally, although improving at present. The progress they make has been inconsistent, and often too slow, in the last two years.

### The school has the following strengths

- Children make good progress in the Reception class because the teaching is good. Reading is also taught well in school. As a result pupils make good progress and tackle unfamiliar texts with confidence.
- Pupils enjoy school, feel very safe and are well behaved.
- Senior leaders and governors are highly motivated, with a well-judged vision for further improvement. More rigorous checking of teaching and learning and effective management of teachers' performance are contributing to more rapid and consistent learning by pupils.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 23 lessons, of which eight were joint observations with senior leaders.
- Meetings were held with a group of pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body and another governor, with the school’s middle and senior leaders, and with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of the 44 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View).
- Inspectors observed the school’s work and looked at a range of school documentation, including records of the monitoring of teaching, the school improvement plan, records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding, and extracts from the school’s tracking of pupils’ progress. A scrutiny of pupils’ written work was also undertaken and inspectors listened to pupils reading.

## Inspection team

George Logan, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Susan Senior

Additional Inspector

Noureddin Khassal

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Warden House is a larger-than-average primary school.
- Most pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported by school action, at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- The proportion of pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and for whom the school receives additional income (the pupil premium) is slightly above the national average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school has gained a number of awards, including re-accreditation for the Quality in Extended Services Established Level award.
- The school shares its site with a private nursery school. This is inspected separately.
- The school hosts onsite breakfast and after-school clubs. These are managed by the governing body and are reported upon as part of the current inspection.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that teaching enables pupils to make more consistently good progress by:
  - providing well-paced activities which challenge the full range of pupils, particularly for the pupils at School Action
  - securing consistency and accuracy in the assessment of pupils' attainment and understanding
  - ensuring that current efforts to establish high expectations of the quality of presentation of pupils' written work are sustained
  - monitoring closely to ensure that recent initiatives to improve the quality of marking are consistently implemented as good practice across the school.
- Consolidate and improve pupils' achievement in mathematics, so building upon initiatives currently under way, by:
  - rigorously checking to ensure that pupils' progress in mathematics is at least at the expected level year on year
  - ensuring that staff are confident and accurate in their assessment of pupils' skills in mathematics
  - providing frequent planned opportunities for pupils to apply their mathematical skills in subjects across the curriculum.
- Monitor closely the effectiveness of recent changes in the support for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs to ensure that, by the end of the current year:
  - the attainment of these pupils compares favourably with similar pupils nationally
  - progress is consistent for all groups and at least in line with national figures.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### requires improvement

- Progress over time in mathematics was slow in both 2011 and 2012. That said, there has been a steady improvement in progress in mathematics within each year group, indicating that improvements are accumulating across the school. However, these have not yet been sufficient to compensate for past shortfalls, and mathematics is recognised as a key priority with identified areas of improvement including more rigorous checking on pupils' progress, more accurate assessment and ensuring that pupils apply their mathematical skills well in other subjects. Progress in reading and writing was good in 2012.
- The attainment of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs has been inconsistent, often comparing unfavourably with similar pupils nationally. The school has been working to improve the quality of support, with more rigorous leadership, improved identification of needs, more effective specialist training for teaching assistants and a high level of accountability for the progress pupils make. Overall, these pupils are now making better progress, although a few inconsistencies remain, particularly in mathematics and for the School Action group of pupils.
- Children enter Reception with skills generally below those expected for their age. Their progress is mostly good. Almost all now reach the levels expected by the end of the year, with a significant number exceeding expectations. The overall quality of teaching, the range and quality of experiences offered to children, and the outcomes, have all improved since the last inspection.
- While attainment by the end of Year 2 remains below average, it is beginning to rise, particularly in writing, reflecting the improved outcomes at the end of Reception. Standards by the end of Year 6 rose significantly in 2012 and are now broadly average, although higher in reading and writing than in mathematics. This is the result of effective interventions to improve teaching and assessment practice, particularly in relation to reading and writing. Year 6 pupils are now working at levels around those expected for their age, and are further advanced than was the case for Year 6 pupils at the same point last year.
- The use of pupil premium funding to train staff in teaching pupils to link letters to the sounds they make (phonics), establishing smaller teaching groups, alongside a whole-school writing programme and more rigorous monitoring of progress, is leading to better outcomes, particularly in reading and writing. This is being effectively supported by a more rigorous approach to the presentation of pupils' written work but more needs to be done.

### The quality of teaching

### requires improvement

- School leaders have focused on the elimination of weak teaching, through setting clear targets for improvements. Greater consistency in classroom practice and higher expectations of what pupils can achieve are supporting improved progress but there is further work to be done.
- Intensive work on the accurate evaluation of pupils' attainment has ensured that most aspects of assessment practice are now understood and applied consistently, although practice is not at a high level across all classes. Variations in the quality of marking have been tackled recently and there is evidence of significant improvement coming through. Most staff now provide guidance as to the next steps in learning and expect pupils to respond but some inconsistencies remain.
- In less effective lessons, the pace is sometimes slow and work does not always sufficiently challenge the most able pupils. Teachers do not always respond promptly or effectively enough to extend learning.
- In almost all lessons, relationships are good. Where learning is most effective, the pace of the lesson is brisk and assessment is used well to match work closely to pupils' needs. This

was evident in a Year 4 mathematics lesson on the application of subtraction methods to real-life problems. Here, work was set at exactly the right level for each group of pupils, resulting in a high level of pupil engagement and rapid progress by all groups. Challenging questioning was seen in a Year 6 lesson where pupils were considering the motivation of a fictional character.

- Children in the Reception classes learn well because staff provide a range of well-planned activities. Children settle quickly and sustain attention well. Generally effective intervention by adults ensures that children work well cooperatively and learn quickly, although this is a less consistent feature in the outdoor area.
- The teaching of reading is generally good in Years 1 and 2, and consequently progress is improving. Pupils now receive a thorough grounding in phonics. This systematic practice is moving through the school.
- School leaders ensure that support staff are deployed to best advantage. Their work is mostly effective and is contributing to improving progress by their targeted pupils.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils** are good

- As at the last inspection, pupils' behaviour is good. Where teaching really engages pupils, behaviour is sometimes outstanding. The school encourages pupils to be aspirational. As a result, pupils mostly show enthusiasm for learning and are well motivated and courteous. Most parents and carers who expressed a view feel that behaviour is good.
- School records indicate that exclusions have declined significantly and are now at a low level. Pupils are responsive to the very positive ethos of the school and the values it promotes and have few concerns about behaviour. Racist incidents are rare and episodes of inappropriate behaviour have declined. Significant disruption of lessons is infrequent. If incidents occur, well-established procedures ensure that they are managed effectively.
- The school is very inclusive, aiming fully to meet the needs of its community. It provides for pupils with a wide range of needs, including physical, behavioural and learning needs. Pupils with behavioural difficulties or who are identified as vulnerable are supported effectively.
- There are no current reports of bullying of any type. Pupils understand that bullying may take different forms, such as internet bullying or in response to gender or physical differences. Pupils feel that any issues are dealt with quickly through, for example, counselling in the 'Reflection Room' or a range of other effective strategies.
- Both the before- and after-school clubs provide good quality extended care for those pupils who require this facility.
- Pupils have a good understanding of risk, supported well by the school's input on personal safety, particularly in relation to road safety, e-safety and fire safety. They understand how to keep themselves safe in most circumstances. Pupils are very confident in the adults around them. The school is highly effective in promoting pupils' self-esteem.
- Attendance is broadly average. Persistent absence is rare. Pupils mostly arrive punctually.

### **The leadership and management** are good

- The persistence and determination of school leaders has enabled them, in the last two years, successfully to address a number of underlying issues. These were mainly around leadership and teaching and had contributed to a long-standing culture of underachievement. Leadership and teaching teams have been restructured and the aspirations of both pupils and staff have been raised.
- School self-evaluation is generally accurate. The school knows itself well and has a well-judged agenda for further improvement. Monitoring and evaluation are generally thorough and accurate. Targets in the the school development plan are closely linked to the further

improvement of teaching and learning and the raising of achievement.

- Performance management processes are thorough and have begun to have an impact. Staff have improved opportunities for professional development. Middle leaders are enthusiastic and knowledgeable and are now actively involved in monitoring teaching and learning. They are increasingly empowered to carry out their roles.
- The school has received good support from its local authority and this has contributed significantly to the rapid progress made in the last year.
- Progress since the last inspection has been adequate. Both teaching and outcomes have improved significantly for reading and writing, although less so in mathematics. Overall, the school currently has good capacity to improve.
- The curriculum prioritises reading, writing and mathematics, with a recent focus on promoting greater awareness of how different subjects inter-relate. Pupils have good opportunities to extend their learning beyond the ordinary school day, including through clubs and the school's extended provision.
- Pupils' spiritual and moral development is supported well through collective worship and religious education. Cultural awareness is now promoted more effectively than at the last inspection, through the curriculum and charitable, church and international links.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Governors understand the strengths and weaknesses of the school and have an accurate perception of its overall effectiveness. They willingly participate in training and have become increasingly confident in challenging the school's performance. They recognise that inherited decisions, whereby a high proportion of current staff are close to the top of the higher pay scale, may compromise future flexibility, and they are aware of the need to ensure that pay and promotion are rigorously aligned to teachers' effectiveness. Governors have a good understanding of how well pupils achieve and are aware of their responsibility, along with other leaders and staff, to ensure equality of opportunity for all and to tackle any form of discrimination. They have been involved in decisions relating to the deployment of pupil premium funding and in the analysis of its impact. As a result, they are clear that this additional funding is helping to close the gap in pupils' achievement, regardless of initial disadvantage. Governors also ensure, along with senior leaders, that all safeguarding arrangements are robust and, at the time of the inspection, effective.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	118390
<b>Local authority</b>	Kent
<b>Inspection number</b>	401748

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	369
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Dan Jones
<b>Headteacher</b>	Graham Chisnell
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	10 November 2009
<b>Telephone number</b>	01304 375040
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