

Warden Park Primary Academy

New England Road, Haywards Heath, West Sussex, RH16 3JR

Inspection dates 9–10 October 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected	
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
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

- Achievement in English and mathematics requires improvement at Key Stage 1 and is not yet consistently good at Key Stage 2.
- Inconsistencies in teaching at Key Stage 1 have slowed pupils' progress over time.
- Teachers do not consistently maintain a brisk pace in lessons, match work to pupils' abilities or question in a way that deepens their understanding.
- The most able pupils are not always fully challenged in lessons and this slows their progress.
- Pupils' progress in writing is hampered by insufficient focus on spelling, punctuation and grammatical skills.
- Subject leaders are not yet sufficiently involved in holding staff to account for the progress pupils make or in checking what is happening in the classroom.

The school has the following strengths

- Pupils in Key Stage 2 make good progress in their reading. Their progress in writing and mathematics is accelerating, with evidence of good progress in most year groups.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make good progress due to effective provision.
- The school provides a strong, caring and safe environment for its pupils.
- Pupils behave well, feel safe, enjoy being talk partners in lessons and are kind and courteous to each other and adults.
- The headteacher, senior staff and academy directors have worked extremely hard to bring about sustained improvement in pupils' achievement.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 16 lessons or part lessons of which two were joint observations with senior leaders.
- Meetings were held with two groups of pupils, the Chair of the Academy Trust and four other directors, the leadership team and other senior staff.
- Inspectors took account of the 38 responses to the online Parent View survey. They also spoke to several parents and carers when they brought their children to school. They also took account of the 23 staff questionnaires
- They observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including the school's information on pupils' current progress, planning and checks on the quality of teaching, records relating to behaviour and attendance, the sports premium action plan and documents relating to safeguarding.
- The inspectors listened to pupils reading in Years 2 and 6.

Inspection team

Janet Sinclair, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Ramesh Kapadia

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Warden Park is an average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is well above average. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is well above average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is above average, a small proportion of whom are at an early stage of learning English.
- The school meets the current government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- The number of pupils eligible for additional funding through the pupil premium (additional funding for pupils in local authority care, from armed forces families or known to be eligible for free school meals) is well above average. There are no pupils from armed forces families in the school.
- The school became a sponsored academy in January 2012. It is sponsored by a local secondary school.
- The school has increased in size significantly in the last eighteen months.
- Pupils are taught in a combination of single and mixed-age classes – Year R, R/1, Year 1, Year 2, Year 3, three Year 4/5 classes and a Year 6 class.
- There have been several teaching staff changes recently, including those new to the profession.
- Most pupils attend for breakfast each morning.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve pupils' achievement, particularly in Key Stage 1, by ensuring consistently good or better teaching through:
 - using questioning that challenges pupils and deepens their understanding
 - providing better match of work to pupils' abilities, particularly the most able
 - increasing the pace in lessons by increasing pupils' active involvement in their learning.
- Improve the quality of pupils' writing by improving their grammar, spelling and punctuation skills.
- Build the capacity of leadership and management to drive improvement by:
 - developing the role of staff who manage subjects or aspects of the school so that they are more involved in checking pupils' learning and holding staff accountable for how well pupils in their classes are doing.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Achievement requires improvement because attainment is below average and too few pupils at Key Stage 1 make good progress over time due to inconsistencies in teaching.
- Attainment at Key Stage 2 is improving from a fairly low base. In 2013, it was below expectations in English and broadly in line with expectations in mathematics. Pupils made good progress in Year 6, but their progress over time required improvement. The attainment of pupils currently in Year 6 is broadly in line with national expectations. Their progress in reading is good and is better than expected in writing and mathematics.
- Progress across the rest of Key Stage 2 is accelerating, with good progress in reading and improving rates of progress in writing and mathematics. This is as a result of improvements in teaching and careful checks, and support where necessary, to ensure pupils' rates of progress are maintained.
- Although progress in writing is improving, with an increasing amount of good progress, attainment is still below average. The school is working hard to bring about improvement through regular checks on pupils' performance and careful marking of their work. However, there is not enough focus on correcting spelling, punctuation and grammatical errors, and this is hindering overall progress.
- The progress of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is also accelerating due to specific work matched to their needs and effective support from the inclusion manager, teachers and teaching assistants.
- Pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium have shown poor performance in the national tests in English and mathematics in terms of their attainment. In 2012, their results showed that in terms of progress they were in line in English and mathematics, compared with other pupils in the school. Pupils in the current Year 6 who attract the pupil premium have made similar progress in English and mathematics to other pupils in the school. The school uses its sports funding well to provide swimming lessons for all Key Stage 2 pupils, a specialist teacher to provide training for all staff and greater involvement in sporting activity for targeted groups. This will ensure greater consistency in effective physical education teaching and involvement in sports, including sporting competitions, and will remain the remit of a member of staff so that the provision is sustained.
- Although work is mainly well matched to pupils' previous learning, it does not always sufficiently challenge the most able pupils, which impedes their progress.
- Careful checks and individualised work for those not doing well enough are ensuring they catch up. This is closing the gaps in the performance of different groups, promoting greater equality of opportunity and discouraging discrimination.
- Pupils who start school with very little English are well supported to ensure their English language skills improve.
- Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills and abilities well below those expected for their age. They make good progress in all areas of learning due to effective provision that is well managed by the early years leader.
- The school provides breakfast for all pupils should they wish to attend before school. It is a well organised, healthy provision that gets pupils off to a good start.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching over time requires improvement as pupils' learning has not been good enough, particularly at Key Stage 1. Additionally, practice across the rest of the school is not yet wholly consistent and this means that, although pupils' progress is accelerating, and increasingly good, there is still some variation.

- Teachers do not always provide sufficient challenge in tasks for pupils, particularly the most able pupils. For example, in a mathematics lesson in a Year 4/5 class, the most able pupils found the task easy and there was no extension within it to provide greater challenge.
- Staff do not always question pupils in a way that will extend their ideas. For example, staff tend to expect a short answer from pupils and do not ask further questions to deepen their knowledge and understanding.
- In some lessons the pace is too slow and when this occurs pupils' interest wanes, often as a result of teachers keeping pupils for too long on whole class work. For example, in a Key Stage 1 lesson some pupils became bored as they sat overlong on the mat and there was too much teacher repetition.
- Teachers provide good opportunities for writing, which pupils enjoy. They do not, however, focus enough on ensuring improvement in pupils' spelling, punctuation and grammar and this hinders progress.
- There is a good level of consistency in the marking of pupils' work, with a clear focus on what pupils have done well and what they need to do to improve. Pupils in Year 6 have a regular time each day to correct their work and they are clear that this helps them to improve.
- Where lessons are good, they are well planned to build on previous learning, activities are interesting and work is pitched at the right level for all pupils. This was clearly seen in a literacy lesson in a Year 4/5 class and small group phonics teaching in Reception and Key Stage 1, where pupils made good progress.
- Pupils make good progress in reading at Key Stage 2 due to the small group work they receive in regular guided reading sessions and through their literacy work, as well as use of the library to stimulate their interest in reading.
- In the past, pupils have not performed well in the phonics screening assessment. Teachers are now addressing this through effective small group teaching of sounds and letters (phonics) in Reception and Key Stage 1 and this is helping to improve pupils' reading and writing skills. For example, pupils in Year 2 who read to an inspector spoke of their enjoyment of reading and used their phonic skills well to read unfamiliar words.
- Good relationships, effective interactions and a positive learning environment ensure that children in Early Years Foundation Stage enjoy their learning and develop their skills well. For example, in a lesson seen they were excited at the prospect of discovering the contents of a large box and made good progress in finding interesting words to describe certain objects.
- Teaching assistants provide effective support for pupils who have special educational needs, those known to be eligible for the pupil premium and those at an early stage of learning English.
- Pupils have good attitudes to their work and enjoy all that is on offer. Relationships are good across the school. Pupils say that teachers make lessons fun, treat them well and are calm and supportive. They particularly enjoy the opportunities they get to discuss their work and share ideas with each other.
- Homework is linked well to the topics pupils are studying. For example, pupils in Year 6 carried out research for their work on the Second World War and, in the Year 4/5 classes, pupils wrote about delicious foods.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

is good

- Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. Play times are well managed and pupils use the equipment on offer sensibly. Older pupils say that behaviour is much better than previously and has improved greatly over time.
- Lunch times are well managed and school meals are nutritious, which contribute well to pupils' behaviour and well-being.
- There are no recorded incidents of bullying. Pupils say that there is very little bullying and they mostly get on well with each other. They are aware of the different forms of bullying and are quite clear that there is not any derogatory name calling.
- The school prides itself on being an inclusive organisation that supports its pupils with identified

behaviour problems well. These pupils sometimes find it difficult to behave well and this occasionally disrupts the learning of others. When this happens and additionally, where needed, they receive support well-tailored to their needs in order to minimise the impact of their behaviour on others. Occasionally, when behaviour is extreme, this results in exclusion for a small number of pupils.

- Pupils have good attitudes to school and get on well with each other. They are kind and caring towards each other. They enjoy the opportunities they get to work together on tasks, particularly as talk partners. They also enjoy taking on responsibilities, such as being members of the school council, and have been involved in the 'back on track' initiative to improve behaviour.
- Attendance is broadly average for most pupils. The school works hard to encourage good attendance for its very diverse population, including very clear guidelines on holidays in term time, follow up on those who find attending school regularly difficult and involve other agencies, where necessary.
- The school provides a safe and supportive environment for its pupils and ensures that regular risk assessments are undertaken. Pupils feel very safe in school and confident of adult support should they need it. They learn about keeping safe through, for example, fire safety talks, being junior road safety officers and learning how to resuscitate in an emergency.
- The school has policies and procedures in place to ensure consistent behaviour management, both in class and around the school, and pupils are clear about the expectations for their behaviour.
- Parents who responded to the online Parent View survey and those spoken to during the inspection strongly agree that behaviour is good and the school keeps their children safe.

The leadership and management is good

- Since the school became an academy, the directors of the academy trust, the headteacher and the senior leaders of the school have worked extremely hard to bring about rapid improvement in pupils' progress and teaching and learning and, in this short time, have been largely successful. The school has expanded, it has benefited from strong links with the secondary school and, as a result, achievement at Key Stage 2 has risen significantly and teaching over time has also improved. This indicates good leadership and further capacity for improvement.
- The very strong links with the secondary school through the academy trust have provided the school with a huge number of benefits, including resources, support for science and mathematics teaching, weekly modern foreign languages teaching and sports festivals.
- Subject and aspect leaders, some of whom are new, have been well supported, including attending a middle leaders course. However, they do not yet check the information on pupils' progress or observe teaching and learning in the classroom and this limits their overall impact.
- School self-evaluation is mainly accurate. The school development plan is detailed and clearly focused on key areas, ensuring that these are monitored carefully and tackled fully. Trust directors and senior staff are fully involved in monitoring progress towards key goals.
- Very careful tracking of pupils' progress ensures that the school can quickly identify any pupils falling behind and ensures they get targeted support to help them catch up. This is helping to accelerate rates of progress for all pupils.
- Monitoring of teaching and learning is thorough and rigorous. It includes external moderation, work sampling, checks on teachers' planning, and 'drop ins', as well as detailed lesson observations. This ensures that the headteacher and senior leaders have a clear view of teaching quality and what needs to be done to improve it further. Effective feedback to staff helps them to reflect on their teaching and gives them clear guidance on how to improve, which is followed up on subsequent visits to ensure teaching improves. The headteacher has already formed a clear view of current teaching quality based on recent teaching staff changes.
- The process of setting individual and whole-school targets for all staff is fully in place. Targets are specific, linked to pupils' progress and salary progression. Reviews take place regularly, and

there is a good commitment by all staff to ensuring targets are met.

- The trust has an agreed process of setting individual and whole-school targets for all staff and ensuring they are met that is fully in place. Measures of success are specific and ensure accountability from staff.
- Much has been put in place to bring about rapid improvement, but leadership has not ensured that provision at Key Stage 1 has accelerated in line with the rest of the school. However, it is aware that this needs to be addressed quickly to ensure it makes the rapid improvement seen in Key Stage 2.
- The curriculum offers opportunities for pupils to develop their skills through interesting topics or learning journeys, as well as learning a foreign language at Key Stage 2. There is a good range of visits, visitors and after-school clubs that enrich the curriculum well. There is also a developing musical tradition in the school, with individual tuition and a well-attended, enthusiastic school orchestra.
- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Pupils are kind and caring towards each other, have a clear sense of right and wrong and work well together on tasks.
- There are good links with parents who are very happy with the school and what it provides. They provide good financial support to the school through the parent teacher association.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The directors of the academy trust provide support and challenge equally to ensure the school improves. They have a good knowledge of the quality of teaching and learning because they are well informed by the headteacher; there is a link secondary director who provides ongoing links and there are checks on the quality of provision from a consultant headteacher. They make sure that safeguarding procedures are fully in place so that pupils and staff are kept safe. They rigorously monitor the school's finances, including the pupil premium funding and how effectively it is spent. They are supporting the school in the effective use of the sports funding. Directors have a good knowledge of how well pupils are doing due to the detailed tracking that is in place and regular updates from the headteacher. They are also aware of how this compares with other institutions. All have well-developed expertise, due to relevant training and are fully informed of local and national initiatives. They are involved in setting performance management targets for the headteacher and have a good knowledge and involvement in the process of setting salary increases for staff.

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	137211
Local authority	Sponsored Academy Trust
Inspection number	399884

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Sponsored Academy Trust
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	241
Appropriate authority	The Academy Trust
Chair	Jonathan Ash-Edwards
Headteacher	Steve Davis
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	01444 451264
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