

Joydens Wood Junior School

Birchwood Drive, Wilmington, Kent, DA2 7NE

Inspection dates 4–5 March 2015

| | | | |
|--------------------------------|----------------------|--|----------|
| Overall effectiveness | Previous inspection: | Not previously inspected as an academy | |
| | 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 |

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The headteacher, with senior and middle leaders and the governing body, shares a positive vision for the school. This is understood and put into action well by the staff.
- As a result of good teaching, pupils' reading and their work in mathematics are of a very high standard, well above average.
- Pupils leave the school confident and ready for their secondary education.
- Pupils behave consistently well. This helps their learning.
- The school caters for the needs of pupils with special educational needs or disabilities well. Many parents speak highly of this.
- Those pupils entitled to the support of the pupil premium funding make good progress.
- The school's curriculum is very broad and interesting to pupils. They take part in many exciting and motivating activities. Their spiritual, moral, cultural and social development is good.
- Pupils enjoy school and their rate of attendance is high.
- The school improvement plan is a clearly targeted document which is promoting successful improvement in key areas.
- The school does all it can to keep pupils safe and has robust safeguarding procedures.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils' skills in writing, although improving, are close to average, not matching their skills in reading and mathematics.
- Parents' views of the school are polarised. While most are very pleased with the school, a significant minority is unhappy with it. The school has not yet satisfactorily addressed the concerns expressed by these parents.
- The leaders of subjects other than English and mathematics are not sure how well pupils attain and achieve in these subjects. They cannot say plainly where there are strengths and weaknesses in pupils' understanding. This makes further planning to improve these subjects more difficult.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in 18 lessons, across all the classes, two jointly with senior staff. They observed playtimes and an assembly and heard pupils from Years 3 and 6 read. They scrutinised displays and samples of pupils’ work, in some cases with senior staff.
- They met with staff, governors, pupils and parents, also receiving letters from some parents. They considered carefully the views of parents via the 98 responses to Parent View on the Ofsted website. Inspectors looked at the 28 confidential questionnaires received from members of staff.
- The inspectors evaluated documentation, including improvement plans, minutes of meetings, records concerning the safeguarding of pupils and the school’s own self-evaluations.

Inspection team

Robin Hammerton, Lead inspector

Her Majesty’s Inspector

Alastair McMeckan

Additional Inspector

Joyce Lydford

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a medium-sized junior school, with 11 classes. It serves a commuter area of Kent close to the border with Greater London. Most pupils come to the school from the infant academy on the same site.
- The proportion of pupils entitled to the support of pupil premium funding is well below average.
- Most pupils are White British. Few pupils speak English as a second language.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is below average.
- The school meets the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations of pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Joydens Wood Junior School converted to become an academy school on 1 November 2011. When its predecessor school, also called Joydens Wood Junior School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be outstanding overall. The headteacher joined the school after it became an academy.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve pupils' attainment in their technical skills in writing, particularly their use of:
 - accurate punctuation and spelling
 - correct grammar
 - correct letter formation and tidy presentation
 - good sentence and paragraph construction.
- Develop methods to check accurately how well pupils are achieving in subjects beyond English and mathematics, and use this information to plan further developments in teaching and curriculum content in these subjects.
- Take specific action to engage with, understand and provide for, the needs and concerns of those parents who are dissatisfied with the school.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher has a clear vision for the school. She pursues this untiringly, with strong support from the deputy and assistant headteachers and staff. She is particularly determined that pupils should be treated kindly and make good decisions for themselves. They should enjoy lessons and topics which engage them actively and lead to a well-rounded, broad education. Increasingly, this vision is being realised.
- The headteacher and her senior staff actively and successfully promote equality of opportunity and tackle discrimination. Where any notable differences between the performance of different groups of pupils emerge, these are rapidly pursued and dealt with. Lessons and assemblies clearly address issues about unfairness and discrimination. Good relationships are thus effectively fostered across the school.
- The deputy headteacher manages the provision for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities well. Parents are pleased about this.
- Most parents would recommend the school to others. Many say the headteacher and staff are very approachable. They like the availability and work of the family liaison officer. However, the headteacher and governors are well aware that there is a significant minority of parents who express intense dissatisfaction with the school.
- Some of these dissatisfied parents disagree with aspects of school policy and feel insufficiently consulted on them. In other cases, parents consider that matters about their individual children's needs are not well met or communicated to them. The reasons for these views are complex, but the headteacher accepts that when she first started at the school, in particular, she did not always take parents with her when making the changes she wanted to make.
- As a result, the school improvement plan, which is well constructed and effective, contains a major section specifically aimed at improving relationships with parents. This contains useful actions, such as creating a parents' forum. However, it does not address the immediate concerns of the dissatisfied parents and, consequently, is not yet successful in engaging these parents better.
- The school's self-evaluation is accurate.
- Subject leaders have successfully promoted improvements in reading and mathematics. In writing, the school's emphasis is on helping pupils to enjoy writing more and on engaging boys. This is being achieved, but does not go far enough in ensuring pupils can also write well enough.
- Pupils enjoy a broad and motivating curriculum. There are all sorts of interesting lessons and activities, indoors and out, requiring different skills and types of thinking and understanding. British values are promoted well through this curriculum, which includes specific values lessons. Pupils learn about many different religions and cultures, in the present and past. This promotes tolerance and understanding and helps prepare pupils suitably for life in modern Britain.
- There is, nevertheless, room for further improvement in the curriculum. Subject leaders work very hard to organise and encourage all the interesting lessons and activities. However, they cannot say how well pupils achieve in subjects apart from English and mathematics. It is not always obvious how all the activities fit together into a fully coherent and progressive programme of learning across the four years for all pupils. Leaders spot, rightly, that gaps can develop in the provision in some subjects, including music.
- The school has appropriate, constructive links with the adjacent infant academy, leading to smooth transitions from Year 2 into Year 3.
- The procedures for safeguarding pupils are thorough and meet requirements.
- Senior staff spend pupil premium funding effectively. It usefully supports the raising of aspirations and attainment for the pupils concerned.
- The school uses its additional funding for sport and physical education effectively. External consultants train school staff in developing their skills in teaching physical education, leading to increased participation in sport by pupils and higher quality lessons.
- The school pursues any poor attendance, behavioural or other concerns rigorously and kindly. Many parents comment positively on the personalised and effective support from the school, which helps to resolve any problems.
- Pupils learn usefully about the jobs that adults do.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body is appropriately organised and well led by its new Chair. Its members are highly committed and often visit the school. Thus, they know from first-hand experience much about teaching and pupils' achievement, and how any underperformance is dealt with. With the detailed reports they

also receive from the headteacher, governors are knowledgeable and well placed to make sound decisions, including budgetary decisions. Nevertheless, they were not sufficiently aware of the deficiencies in the technical aspects of pupils' writing, such as grammar and punctuation.

- Governors ask challenging questions of senior staff, which are recorded in the minutes of their meetings. Rightly, the Chair of the Governing Body considers that more could be done to make an 'audit trail' of governors' questions, with specific following actions and checks, so that governors' work has maximum impact.
- Working with the headteacher, governors ensure that the management of the performance of staff is effectively carried out. The school has strong systems ensuring that staff pay progression is fairly and correctly managed.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils behave very well inside and outside lessons. Staff have established positive and clear routines, so pupils know what is expected. Systems, such as red and yellow cards, are sparingly used and effective.
- In lessons, pupils are confident and enthusiastic. They look after each other and are keen to work together. They are attentive to their teachers. As a result, time is used well in lessons. Teachers do not have to wait long for pupils to settle down.
- Pupils are open and friendly, keen to discuss the school and their learning. One said, 'We are all friends and we keep each other happy.'
- Pupils sensibly enjoy engaging teaching activities and methods used in lessons across the whole school, such as 'Heads Up, Write Up' which involves them moving around the classroom and rapidly changing their partners. Their good behaviour during such activities promotes good learning.
- Attendance is consistently above the national average for all groups of pupils.
- Pupils have opportunities to take real responsibilities as members of the school parliament, ambassadors, buddies or house captains. These opportunities involve pupils in representing the views of others and in democratic activity, also promoting fundamental British values.
- The pupils who met with inspectors were not aware of any bullying in the school. They are confident that this would, in any case, be dealt with quickly. They are fully aware of different types of bullying, including online, homophobic and racist bullying. The well-kept school incident log suggests that bullying is rare. However, some parents feel that the school has not dealt well with some bullying.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good.
- The school's safeguarding procedures fully meet requirements. The consistently strong systems are fully known to staff and governors. Pupils feel very safe and well looked after. They know the safety rules, such as how to walk sensibly in corridors and what to do at playtime, and apply these routinely.
- The school takes its responsibilities for pupil's e-safety, when using the internet and social media, very seriously. Staff and pupils know how to use different media confidently and understand the necessary restrictions well.
- Pupils like the 'worry buddies' in each classroom. They can share with staff any concerns which they say are dealt with kindly, quickly and sensitively.

The quality of teaching is good

- The headteacher and senior staff work hard and effectively to improve teaching. Where there remain minor inconsistencies in teaching quality, these are followed up effectively through coaching, advice and setting targets for teachers. The staff feel well supported and trained. As a result, pupils achieve well.
- Across the school, teachers plan lessons sharply and involve teaching assistants with useful specific tasks. The relationships between adults and pupils are very positive. Classrooms are all stimulating places with high-quality displays. Pupils are well motivated and know exactly what is expected.
- Teachers know their pupils well. They are adept at adjusting lessons quickly to deal effectively with any misunderstandings that pupils may show. Their questioning of pupils is a real strength, as it often helps pupils to consider deeply and explain their thinking. Pupils are confident to ask questions of adults if they are not sure of something or just want to know more.

- Teachers' marking of pupils' work is generally thorough, but occasionally pupils do not follow up the comments to improve their work.
- Teachers and teaching assistants meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs well in lessons, and occasional activities to help pupils catch up outside class lessons.
- In most lessons, teachers make sensible choices from a repertoire of techniques established in the school. These are generally interesting to pupils and make their learning fun, as well as relevant and challenging. One pupil said, for example, 'We're doing work on funfairs but really it's maths!' This helps particularly in promoting good learning in reading and mathematics.
- The school successfully helps pupils to enjoy writing more through lively teaching. However, this teaching does not focus clearly enough on developing technical writing skills. For example, in one lesson, pupils enjoyed acting together, making different facial expressions and sharing ideas for future writing about a disaster. However, staff missed opportunities in the lesson and over time to teach pupils about grammar and punctuation.
- Many of the strengths in teaching were shown in a Year 6 design and technology lesson. The teacher, who showed strong subject knowledge, very judiciously balanced the direction she was giving with freedom of choice for the pupils. She ensured their understanding through expert questioning. They thoroughly enjoyed applying their scientific, mathematical and technical learning when designing and making quite sophisticated automated buggies in pairs. Pupils practised techniques securely and learned quickly.

The achievement of pupils is good

- In the 2014 national Year 6 assessments, pupils' attainment was notably above average in mathematics and reading. More than half of the pupils reached above average levels. In writing and spelling, grammar and punctuation tests, however, pupils attained less well, close to the national average.
- Most pupils made the expected progress in writing throughout the school, but few made better progress than this. Boys fared less well than girls. This was in marked contrast to the other subjects, where high numbers of pupils made accelerated progress, in many cases from high starting points they had reached when in Year 2. Nearly one in 10 pupils reached the very high Level 6 in mathematics in 2014.
- The school's current data and scrutiny of pupils' work indicate that the school has sustained high standards in reading and mathematics this year. Pupils from all groups make good progress throughout the school.
- In a mathematics lesson, for example, pupils learned rapidly, demonstrating sharp thinking, when solving problems about proportions and ratio. They applied their learning from previous lessons successfully.
- Pupils enjoy reading. As one boy put it, 'Reading brings imagination to my mind.' Their books, which they choose, are at a correct level of challenge, indicating the school's high expectations. During the inspection, pupils were keen to discuss the *Where's Wally?* books knowledgeably on World Book Day.
- The pupils who read to inspectors did so confidently. They could usually self-correct any errors, linking letters and sounds securely. Pupils could comprehend the texts and draw inferences. One said, for example, of a book character, 'She was obviously lying.' Older pupils who attain less well in reading than most of their peers are, nevertheless, ready for the demands of their secondary education.
- Pupils' writing has improved recently. Pupils demonstrate greater enjoyment of, and confidence in, writing. However, across the school, and at all ability levels, there is room for improvement in how well pupils use and apply punctuation, grammar and spelling rules. Boys' achievement remains slightly below that of girls'. Pupils do not always construct sentences as well as they might and are sometimes unsure of how to use paragraphs. Sometimes, their writing is untidy.
- Disadvantaged pupils, entitled to the support of the pupil premium funding, achieve well in relation to their peers nationally. In 2014, they reached above average attainment in mathematics and reading compared to all pupils nationally. All made the expected progress from their starting points in writing, although their attainment was lower. School data indicate that the gap between their attainment, and that of their classmates, which is on average about six months, continues to close rapidly.
- Pupils who show high ability in particular subjects achieve well. Pupils who entered the school with high outcomes in Key Stage 1 continue to make strong progress and attain well, especially in reading and mathematics. The school has evidence, too, that it meets the needs of many pupils with particular aptitudes or interests in sport or music, for example, and that these pupils achieve well.
- Disabled pupils, and those who have special needs, achieve well, making progress in line with that of their peers, which accelerates in the older year groups.

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

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|--------------------------------|--------|
| Unique reference number | 137661 |
| Local authority | Kent |
| Inspection number | 449360 |

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

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| Type of school | Junior |
| School category | Academy converter |
| Age range of pupils | 7–11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 289 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Sharon Allsop-Kenney |
| Headteacher | Jenny Chiverton |
| Date of previous school inspection | Not previously inspected |
| Telephone number | 01322 522151 |
| Fax number | 01322 556116 |
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