

Whitstable and Seasalter Endowed Church of England Junior School

High Street, Whitstable, Kent CT5 1AY

Inspection dates

24–25 January 2017

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
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school

- The headteacher and deputy headteacher have high aspirations and uncompromising ambition for the pupils and the school. Together they have built on the school's many strengths to create an environment where staff and pupils excel.
- Leaders at all levels share a determination to provide the very best for all pupils. Morale is high, with staff across the school taking on leadership roles willingly. Staff's consistently high expectations motivate pupils to achieve the very highest standards.
- The quality of teaching is outstanding. Teachers have strong subject knowledge, which they combine with skilled questioning to extend pupils' thinking and deepen their understanding.
- Teachers assess pupils' progress in English and mathematics accurately and use these assessments to plan work that is matched precisely to pupils' needs.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make accelerated progress from their starting points. This is because of the highly effective individualised support they receive.
- Pupils know that their views are important. Their articulate contributions to lessons help to move learning on. They debate and reflect on world issues impressively.
- Pupils feel safe. They know that if they have any difficulties with friendships or bullying that they will be listened to. They trust staff to sort out any problems.
- Staff strive to ensure that pupils are safe and happy. Resolutions are supported by the strong values of the school and used as a learning process. Kindness is valued highly.
- Pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of key stage 2 is significantly above national averages.
- All groups of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, make rapid and sustained progress from their starting points.
- Pupils blossom and thrive because of the school's outstanding work. Parents and pupils are confident that pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that middle leaders have maximum impact in securing high standards and accelerating progress across the wider curriculum.
- Continue to share the school's many strengths more widely across the local cluster of schools.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Outstanding

- The headteacher provides inspirational leadership. Together with the very able deputy headteacher, she has created a culture of excellence where staff and pupils thrive and achieve their potential. There is a relentless drive for improvement and innovation, and a determination to unlock the learning potential of each pupil. This results in a school with clear priorities in which everybody strives to be the best that they can be.
- Middle leaders are passionate about grasping every opportunity to develop their skills for the good of the school and, most importantly, the pupils. They relish the support provided by regular performance management from the senior team, which they describe as 'challenge with hot chocolate'.
- Staff support each other and work as a cohesive team in which they are all seen as potential leaders. They benefit from close working with other schools through the coastal alliance, where collective knowledge and expertise are shared. For example, the science leader has benefited from recent work to develop systems to track pupils' progress in science.
- High-quality leadership of English and mathematics ensures that pupils develop their basic skills effectively. This helps pupils to improve their knowledge, skills and understanding across other curriculum areas. For example, the English leader has provided staff with a helpful toolkit to support writing across the curriculum.
- Staff are committed passionately to enhancing the school's values of love, learning and laughter. Adults and pupils model these values in all that they do. All the staff who responded to the staff survey agreed that leaders motivate and respect them.
- Leader's procedures for identifying pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are extremely effective. Additional special educational needs funding is spent wisely. Highly skilled staff use individual approaches to support pupils to be fully included in all areas of school life. Parents of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities recognise the many ways in which their children are supported. As one parent put it, 'They embrace and nurture our son. We are bowled over at the progress he has made.'
- English and mathematics leaders use assessment information very effectively to help pupils make rapid progress. Teachers gather information about pupils' progress carefully and consistently. They share and use this information expertly to review progress and plan next steps in learning.
- The school's curriculum is wide ranging and interesting for pupils. It provides an opportunity to link basic skills and develop an understanding of the wider world. Curriculum topics such as 'empires and invasions' provide opportunities for pupils to engage with a wide range of activities both within school and in the wider community. Class exhibitions of this work and regular homework allow parents and pupils to enjoy and celebrate learning together.
- Pupils' learning is enriched further by a wide range of extra-curricular opportunities. Pupils enjoy attending breakfast and after-school club (The Oyster Catcher Club), and a

large range of sports and activity clubs including drama, singing, computing and art.

- There is a rich seam of spiritual, moral, social and cultural education running through every element of school life. The ethos is understood and valued by all, providing a unifying purpose which guides interactions and decisions.
- Opportunities to develop understanding of the wider world are very well used to deepen reflection and enrich debate. In a class assembly, pupils discussed peaceful protest and what it meant to have 'no voice'. They expressed a range of informed opinions about world issues concluding that, 'nations can be powerful if they have a stronger economy'. In this way, pupils are prepared well for life in modern Britain.
- Leaders ensure that they use the primary physical education and sports funding effectively. As a result, pupils' participation in sporting activities is very high. Pupils take part in a great range of sporting events throughout the year. Pupils are very proud of their success in sporting competitions.
- Leaders use the additional funding for disadvantaged pupils effectively to meet pupils' needs. Disadvantaged pupils are also consulted about ways in which they learn best, such as a recent questionnaire about writing. As a result, they have the confidence and skills that are needed for them to make rapid progress from their different starting points.
- Middle leaders are very aware of the strengths and priorities for development within their own areas of responsibility. However, senior leaders have identified that subject leaders need to develop the systems to monitor the progress that pupils are making across the wider curriculum better.

Governance of the school

- Governors know the school well. They combine a strategic approach with a deep understanding of the day-to-day life and values of the school. They have established this depth of understanding through a dedication to the school's development in all areas. Governors are at the forefront of the culture of support and challenge which has resulted in the very highest standards across the school.
- Governors value the wealth of information that school leaders give them. They visit the school regularly to talk to staff and see things for themselves. They evaluate the impact of leaders' work in relation to the school's strategic priorities very effectively.
- Governors ensure that the financial resources of the school are being wisely used to secure the best outcomes for pupils. They carry out their statutory duties extremely well.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Leaders make appropriate checks on the suitability of staff to work with children. Record-keeping is meticulous and shows that staff training is up to date.
- Positive relationships with parents mean that highly effective early help and support can be provided by the school team. Where referrals to other agencies are beneficial, these are made in a timely manner. This approach helps pupils and their families get

access to the services that they need and helps to keep pupils safe.

- The headteacher and her team are tenacious in following up on referrals to outside agencies and support services. They keep detailed records and ensure that advice is acted on.
- All staff are aware of their responsibility to keep pupils safe. The caring ethos of the school creates a culture where pupils know that they will be listened to should they have concerns. Pupils are confident in staff members' ability to keep them safe, as are parents.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Outstanding

- Teachers have high expectations of all pupils. Pupils respond to the challenge that this brings with excitement and determination. Pupil comments such as, 'Learning is the hardest thing in the world – and I love it!' are typical. Teachers know pupils well and match tasks carefully so that they stretch pupils, but do not overwhelm them. Because of this, levels of enthusiasm are palpable and pupils' progress is rapid.
- High-quality teaching comes from secure subject knowledge and highly effective questioning techniques. Teachers check pupils' understanding carefully and adjust the pace of learning to ensure that concepts are fully understood before building on them.
- Pupils trust their teachers and are confident to ask questions and volunteer their thoughts and ideas during lessons. They work hard, secure in the knowledge that staff want the best for them, and display exemplary attitudes towards their learning.
- Pupils enjoy the range of challenges presented by mathematical learning. A pupil commented, 'I love maths because my teacher makes it fun, including learning times tables.' Teaching builds on a sound understanding of basic skills, encouraging the development of mathematical thinking and reasoning. In a Year 4 lesson on the perimeter of irregular shapes, pupils were able to explain clearly the range of methods that they had used to arrive at an answer. A Year 6 pupil response to some complex fraction work was typical when he wrote, 'I will do this sum; it's driving me nuts!'
- Pupils write with stamina and to a very high standard. They transfer their skills to other areas of the curriculum, such as their scientific conclusions. They present their work well and are extremely proud when their handwriting reaches the required standard, leading to the special award of a handwriting pen.
- Pupils read widely and for a range of purposes. They are able to talk knowledgeably about their favourite authors and the types of books that they enjoy. Innovative approaches such as the 'reading dog' are used effectively to support pupils in developing reading fluency.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.

- Pupils thrive and the school is a happy place because the family atmosphere created in school helps pupils to feel valued and secure.
- Parents value the care and support provided by the school. As one parent remarked, 'The school, in my opinion, has gone way beyond expected levels of support and care for my child and they have flourished since joining. As a parent, you want to see your child happy and this has been the most amazing transformation for our child since starting at the school.'
- Pupils know that their opinions matter at school. The pupil council votes in members using ballot boxes. Democracy and other fundamental British values are reflected in such activities and in a wide range of displays around the school.
- Pupils say that they feel very safe in school. They are aware of the importance of e-safety because they have had assemblies led by the head boy, with help from visiting experts. They know that staff would 'drop everything to help' them if they needed it.
- On the very rare occasions that bullying does occur, staff respond quickly and effectively. Pupils were very positive about dealing with this kind of problem should it ever occur.
- Transitions into school in Year 3 are planned and supported carefully to help pupils to have a happy start to school. Outstanding levels of care ensure that pupils grow in confidence as they progress through the school. By the time they leave, both pupils and parents are confident that pupils are ready for the challenges of the next stage of their education.
- Staff members' excellent work on promoting spiritual, moral and social education helps pupils to reflect on their actions and to develop resilience and kindness. Pupils care deeply for each other and respect their different needs. For example, they know that at playtimes some pupils prefer the quieter atmosphere of the prayer shack or the reflection garden.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Around the school, pupils open doors and are friendly and polite. Their relationships with each other and with staff are relaxed but respectful. In the playground, their games are carefree and age-appropriate. Pupils are able to resolve the vast majority of minor playground fallings-out themselves, but know that peers and staff are on hand to help if needed.
- Pupils' behaviour both in lessons and around the school is impeccable. In lessons, pupils are rarely off task. This is because they are challenged and engaged by their learning and the expectations of staff are very high.
- Pupils understand the multi-layered rewards and sanction system of the school. Pupils explained the yellow and red card sanction system as being 'just like football', but that 'you wouldn't get a yellow or red card because you just wouldn't want to have one'.
- Regular attendance is highly prized by school leaders. The wide range of attendance awards including certificates and the award of 'Dave the gorilla' motivate pupils to attend well. The family liaison officer monitors attendance weekly and acts swiftly to

support families when needed. Recent attendance information shows levels of attendance to be above the national average.

Outcomes for pupils

Outstanding

- Pupils enter the school with levels of attainment that are typically above those expected for their age. From these high starting points pupils make sustained progress in English and mathematics over time. Provisional results from Year 6 tests in 2016 show pupils' progress overall was well above the national average and in the top 10% in reading.
- More of the most able pupils completing Year 6 in 2016 achieved a greater depth of learning in reading, writing and mathematics than was seen nationally in the provisional results.
- Disadvantaged pupils make rapid and sustained progress because of teaching that is well matched to needs. The pupil premium funding is used effectively to accelerate progress. In 2016, the progress of disadvantaged pupils in Year 6 was better than that of pupils nationally in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are provided for extremely well. Because of highly effective support, pupils develop well as confident and, very often, independent learners. They make progress from their starting points that is often above progress levels seen nationally.
- Since the last inspection, leaders have developed detailed assessment systems for English and mathematics. They use these effectively to track closely the progress of all pupils. This tracking allows leaders and governors to have sharply focused pupil progress meetings, and to adjust support quickly if a need emerges. Tracking information is shared with subject leaders, who respond accordingly. For example, the English leader identified a slowing of rates of progress in some year groups for boys' writing. She then used a questionnaire to gather pupils' opinions and created 'Team Titan', a boys' writing group, to support these pupils.
- The school's own assessments and work seen in pupils' books reflect very high levels of attainment. This aligns with the unrelenting focus on ongoing improvement seen across the school from pupils and staff. There is not a hint of complacency. Everyone continues to aim for the highest possible standards in all that they do.
- Work in pupils' books around the school shows outstanding outcomes in some other curriculum areas, such as art. Leaders' work to secure these high standards across all curriculum areas is in the early stages, but can be seen in some aspects of topic work.

School details

Unique reference number	118737
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10024849

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.

Type of school	Junior
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	7 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	195
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Diane Clements
Headteacher	Ellen Butcher
Telephone number	01227 273630
Website	www.whitstable-endowed.kent.sch.uk
Email address	office@whitstable-endowed.kent.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	5–6 July 2012

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- This is a smaller than average Church of England Junior school. There are six classes: three mixed classes of Year 3 and Year 4 pupils, and three mixed classes of Year 5 and Year 6 pupils.
- The school meets the current government floor standards.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is below the national average.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in classrooms, as they moved round the school and on the playground. They met with senior and middle leaders and the chair of governing body, accompanied by two other governors. The lead inspector also met with a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors observed teaching and learning, visiting all classrooms, talking to children and looking at the quality of their work. All observations on the first day were accompanied by the headteacher and deputy headteacher.
- Inspectors met with pupils and discussed with them their views of the school. They listened to a selection of pupils read.
- Inspectors considered the views of parents by analysing Parent View and meeting parents at the start of the school day.
- Inspectors scrutinised documentation including the school development plan, the school's own self-evaluation and the recruitment checks on staff.
- Inspectors evaluated pupil progress data, including historical data and the school's own in-year pupil progress information.
- Inspectors considered minutes of meetings, including governors' meetings, records of visits from the local authority and feedback from the diocese.

Inspection team

Deborah Gordon, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Graham Chisnell	Ofsted Inspector
Lynn Lawrence	Ofsted Inspector

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