

Timberwood Academy

Cerne Road, Gravesend, Kent DA12 4BN

Inspection dates

22–23 February 2017

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Outstanding
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	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The executive headteacher has transformed the quality of education that pupils receive. Staff, parents and pupils recognise and value the significant improvements that have been made.
- Leaders have had a substantial impact on improving the quality of teaching and raising standards over the last two years.
- Leaders have created a highly inclusive school community. Pupils who are vulnerable and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress.
- Pupils who attend the specially resourced provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress.
- Staff support pupils' personal development and welfare exceptionally well. Pupils are proud of their own achievements and their school.
- Teaching is good. Planned learning takes account of pupils' wide-ranging starting points. All staff make a positive contribution to pupils' learning.
- Pupils in key stage 1 make good progress in a wide range of subjects. Pupils at the end of key stage 2, including those who are disadvantaged, made significantly better progress than other pupils nationally in 2016.
- Behaviour is good. Pupils are polite and courteous. The school is a calm and purposeful place to learn. Some pupils need a great deal of support to ensure that they manage their own behaviour. The care and guidance that these pupils receive is outstanding.
- Children in the early years make good progress, including those with low starting points. Adults develop children's spoken language very effectively.
- Pupil premium funding is used well. As a result, disadvantaged pupils make good progress. In most subjects and year groups, differences are diminishing. Leaders have clear plans to accelerate progress even further in a small number of classes.
- More pupils are coming to school regularly, including those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. However, recent improvements need to be sustained and even more disadvantaged pupils need to come to school more often.
- Teachers have a wide range of information about the progress that pupils are making in reading, writing and mathematics. Teachers are beginning to look closely at the progress that pupils are making in a wide range of subjects.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Teachers should improve pupils' outcomes even further by ensuring that:
 - they know how well pupils are progressing in a wider range of subjects
 - disadvantaged pupils make even more progress in some year groups so that the differences between disadvantaged pupils and other pupils nationally diminish.
- Leaders should ensure that recent improvements in pupils' attendance levels are sustained and that more disadvantaged pupils come regularly to school.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Outstanding

- Leaders' vision, passion and commitment have fundamentally improved the quality of education that pupils receive. The executive headteacher and head of school, in a short space of time, have created a school of which pupils, parents and staff are proud of. As one staff member stated, 'The school just feels a happier, more effective and more driven place to work.'
- Leaders know their school very well because they have a sharp focus on learning, progress and ensuring that no group of pupils is at risk of not making good progress. Leaders spend a lot of time in classrooms, looking at pupils' books and talking to staff and pupils. As a result, leaders have a crystal clear view of what is working well.
- Middle leaders know the school well. Senior leaders are highly effective role models and support for new leaders is effective. Leaders at all levels play an active role in managing the performance of teaching and support staff. As a result, leaders at all levels are having a positive impact on the quality of teaching and learning.
- The curriculum is broad, balanced and rich. Leaders have significantly raised standards in literacy and numeracy through the curriculum because pupils get ample opportunities to use and apply their mathematical and writing skills in their history, geography and science work.
- Pupil premium funding is used effectively. Leaders have clear and detailed plans for how to spend the additional funding. They look closely at what is working and regularly review the progress that pupils are making. Leaders have focused current spending in Year 3 and Year 5 where differences are not diminishing as quickly as they are in all other year groups. In 2016, at the end of key stage 2, disadvantaged pupils made significantly better progress than other pupils nationally.
- The additional physical education and sports funding is used well. Pupils' participation in physical activity and competitive sport has increased over time, including pupils who have complex special educational needs and/or disabilities. Pupils value the positive impact that sports coaches have had on the quality and variety of sports taught.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is highly effective. Pupils develop a very strong sense of what it means to be part of an inclusive school. They know and understand the school's values. Consequently, pupils develop a good understanding of tolerance and respect. Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- Leaders' use of additional funding to support pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is exemplary. Tymberwood is an inclusive school that is valued by the local authority because of its 'can do' approach. Leaders have responded with urgency and creativity to provide an appropriate provision for pupils who have a wide range of complex special educational needs and/or disabilities. Parents are given good-quality information about the work of the school through the annual report that is published on the school's website.
- The academy trust provides effective support for leaders. Leaders value the professional conversations and challenge that the trust offers. The trust has recently

looked closely at some aspects of the leaders' evaluation of the school and helped them to 'test out' their judgements. Leaders welcome close scrutiny because they want the school to be the best it can be.

Governance of the school

- The local governing body is as ambitious as school leaders. Governors know the school well because they understand the performance information they are given and ask relevant questions of leaders. Governors have a sharp focus on the achievement of disadvantaged pupils and effectively hold leaders to account for the progress that pupils make.
- Governors use their time in school to gain additional information about what the school is doing well and what could be even better. Governors' visits to review safeguarding arrangements and processes are comprehensive and provide high-quality scrutiny of the school's effective systems.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders have created a culture where pupils' well-being and safety is central to everything that adults do. Leaders have clear systems and processes for staff to record any concerns and these are known and understood. Weekly updates for staff ensure that safeguarding is given paramount importance. Leaders record all communication clearly and diligently. Referrals to other agencies are detailed and leaders are not afraid to persist when they believe that responses from others need to be quicker or more decisive.
- Staff systematically assess risks both on the school site and when pupils are on trips and visits. Adults have high regard for the additional needs of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Consequently, adults take effective steps to keep pupils safe.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teachers use assessment information well in the teaching of reading, writing and mathematics. Planned learning takes account of pupils' wide-ranging knowledge and skills. All staff who support the learning of pupils have clear roles and responsibilities.
- The teaching of phonics is effective. All adults know and understand the school's agreed systematic approach to teaching phonics. Pupils are given a wide range of opportunities to use and apply what they have learned.
- Pupils develop a wide and rich vocabulary. Adults are ambitious for pupils to hear and understand language that they may not ordinarily encounter. Older pupils work with complex literature and are routinely exposed to new words. Adults are skilful at helping pupils explore the meaning of texts and checking pupils' understanding. Pupils habitually check the meaning of new vocabulary when working independently.
- Staff know and understand the individual plans for pupils who have special educational

needs and/or disabilities. As a result, staff provide pupils with additional teaching and support that meets those needs. For example, staff provide a range of experiences that stimulate pupils' senses appropriately through the day.

- Older pupils are given good opportunities to work scientifically. Pupils plan their tests and think carefully about its fairness. Observations and measurements are precise and pupils record their findings diligently.
- Teachers have a wide range of information about the progress that pupils are making in reading, writing and mathematics. However, the new system to look closely at the progress that pupils are making in a wider range of subjects is not yet having an impact on teaching and learning.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Leaders provide pupils with a rich range of visitors to the school that significantly enhance pupils' personal development. Pupils vividly recall messages about tolerance, racism and making the most out of your time in school. Leaders and governors have developed an exemplary relationship with the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller community. As a result, more pupils are on the school roll and the overall attendance of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller pupils has increased significantly over time.
- Pupils take great pride in their work. Standards of presentation are high. Staff are proud of pupils' achievements. Every corridor and display is awash with the achievements of groups or individual pupils. Older pupils talk with unerring clarity about why their school is now a better place to learn.
- Pupils undertake a wide range of roles and responsibilities. Pupils are proud of the roles they have been elected to do or chosen for. Older pupils take their responsibilities towards the care of young pupils very seriously. Pupils who are confident bilingual learners take an active lead in planning the support and guidance that pupils who arrive new to the school and/or country receive. Pupils instinctively provide their peers who have physical special educational needs and/or disabilities with appropriate additional support.
- The most vulnerable pupils are given exemplary levels of support and guidance from staff. Pupils who do not always arrive at school ready to learn are provided with a calm and nurturing breakfast club. Staff have high expectations of all pupils. Staff know pupils very well and make well thought-out adjustments to their plans for pupils' learning based on pupils' readiness to learn.
- Pupils feel safe in school and say that all adults listen to them. Pupils have a clear understanding of how to stay safe, including online. Pupils understand the safeguards that the school has in place that enable them to research independently using the internet. Pupils are also clear about how to stay safe online at home.
- Older pupils understand what bullying is and is not. Pupils are clear that bullying used to happen in their previous school but that it does not happen now. Pupils feel that adults listen, record and take action when pupils are unkind to each other. Leaders

record diligently pupils' rare use of inappropriate language, including that which is racist, and make appropriate responses.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Classrooms are tranquil places to learn. Relationships between adults and pupils are warm and respectful. Adults have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Pupils know and understand the school's policy for managing behaviour.
- The vast majority of pupils behave well when they move around the school. Break and lunchtimes are largely calm and purposeful. On occasions, a few pupils fall short of the high standards of others when they are lining up or in large groups. Pupils who find it challenging to manage their own behaviour receive outstanding support and guidance. Consequently, the number of significant incidents of poor behaviour has declined.
- More pupils are coming to school regularly. Leaders have successfully reduced the proportion of pupils who are persistently absent from school, including pupils who are disadvantaged. Current pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are coming to school more often than they did in previous years. However, overall levels of absence remain too high, including for pupils who are disadvantaged.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- In 2016, pupils at the end of key stage 2, including those who are disadvantaged, made significantly greater progress in reading, writing and mathematics than other pupils nationally. Standards have risen significantly over time and as a result the majority of pupils are ready for key stage 3.
- Current key stage 2 pupils, including the most able and those who need to catch up, are making good progress. A greater proportion of pupils in Years 5 and 6 are making even greater progress. Pupils are working at a high standard in a range of subjects, including science, history and geography at the end of key stage 2.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress, including pupils who have physical disabilities within the specially resourced provision and the pupils in 'Simon class'. Pupils who did not meet the Year 1 or Year 2 phonics check make good progress from their significantly lower starting points.
- Work in pupils' books and the school's performance information demonstrates that disadvantaged pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. In most year groups, disadvantaged pupils are achieving in line with or above their peers. However, in a small number of classes differences between disadvantaged pupils and other pupils nationally are not diminishing quickly enough.
- In 2016, the proportion of pupils working at the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 2 was broadly in line with the proportion found nationally. Current key stage 1 pupils, including the most able, are making good progress from their starting points.

Early years provision

Good

- Children in the Nursery and Reception Years make good progress, including those who have low starting points. On entry to Nursery, a significant proportion of children do not yet have age-appropriate language and communication skills. The proportion of children, including those who are disadvantaged, who reach a good level of development at the end of the Reception Year is in line with the proportion nationally. Consequently, the majority of children are ready to join Year 1.
- Staff are quick to identify children who require additional support with speaking and listening. Pupil premium funding is used effectively to provide children and staff with specialist speech and language support. Staff are skilled at developing children's speech through songs and games. As a result, children make good progress.
- Teaching in the early years is good. Staff recognise the importance of spoken language and are skilled at talking to children and extending their vocabulary. The youngest children are well supported as they learn how to share, take turns and say 'please' and 'thank you'.
- Assessment information is accurate because staff know children well. However, some adults are more effective than others at recording their observations about what children are doing and saying and why this is significant learning.
- Parents are actively involved in their children's education. Staff provide 'stay and play' sessions for families to see first-hand what their children are learning. Parents are provided with valuable information about how staff teach the children phonics.
- Leaders are clear about the things that are working well in the early years and what could be even better. Leaders provide staff with a wide range of training and development opportunities, including working with other schools to make sure that judgements about children's learning and progress are accurate.

School details

Unique reference number	140167
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10024490

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	455
Appropriate authority	Academy trust
Chair	Anthony Moffatt
Headteacher	Gemma Clark (Executive headteacher), Matt Clark (Head of school)
Telephone number	01474 361193
Website	www.tymerwoodacademy.org
Email address	office@tymerwoodacademy.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Tymerwood became a Reach2 Academy Trust school in February 2014.
- The executive headteacher started in September 2014.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school complies with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish.
- The school met the 2016 floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- The school is twice the size of the national average.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for pupil premium funding is much higher than those

found nationally.

- The proportion of Gypsy, Roma, Traveller pupils at the school has increased over time and is significantly larger than national average.
- Tymberwood has a specially resourced provision for pupils who have physical disabilities. The provision currently has a small number of pupils from across the primary age range. Pupils spend almost all of their time in their mainstream classrooms.
- The school has established a specialist class for pupils who have a wide range of complex special educational needs and/or disabilities, known as 'Simon class'. Pupils spend the majority of their time learning outside of their mainstream classrooms.
- The early years includes a morning and afternoon nursery class.
- The breakfast club is run by the school.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning throughout the school, often with senior leaders. Inspectors looked at pupils' work during lessons and spoke to pupils about their learning.
- Meetings were held with senior leaders and middle leaders, members of the local governing body, and the executive leadership of the trust. Documents relating to governance were reviewed.
- Parents' views were considered through the 26 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, and in conversations with parents at the beginning and end of the school day. The views of staff were considered through the 33 responses to Ofsted's staff survey and through meetings.
- Pupils' views were heard through meetings and by talking to pupils around the school.
- Inspectors considered a wide range of documents, including leaders' evaluations of the school's effectiveness, improvement plans and leaders' analyses of the quality of teaching. Inspectors also evaluated pupils' progress, behaviour and attendance.
- Inspectors reviewed safeguarding records and the central record of recruitment checks on staff.

Inspection team

Mark Cole, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Clementina Aina	Ofsted Inspector
Dan Lambert	Her Majesty's Inspector

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