

Long Mead Community Primary School

Waveney Road, Tonbridge, Kent TN10 3JU

Inspection dates

16–17 May 2017

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Leaders have not maintained the overall quality of pupils' education since the last inspection.
- The quality of teaching is inconsistent. Time in lessons is not used as effectively as it could be. Not all adults who support pupils' learning are clear about what they are doing and why.
- Pupils make inconsistent progress in English. This includes disadvantaged pupils and those pupils who are currently working below the expected standards in key stage 1.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced. However, pupils do not make consistently good progress in subjects such as art and history because planned learning is not always clear enough about the knowledge and skills that pupils are developing.
- Leaders do not manage the performance of staff well enough. Staff have not always been clear about what is expected of them.
- The vast majority of parents are positive about the work of the school and about the staff. Parents have not always felt respected or listened to by some of the school's leaders.
- Governors are not as effective as they could be. They are beginning to use their time in school to see for themselves what leaders tell them. However, governors have not always challenged leaders well enough.
- Leaders, over time, have not recorded or analysed incidents of bullying, racist incidents or poor behaviour. Interim leaders have quickly rectified this.

The school has the following strengths

- Pupils' behaviour is good. The school is a calm and orderly place to learn. Pupils take great pride in their work.
- Governors and interim leaders have ensured that pupils are safe. Shortcomings in some aspects of safeguarding were rectified during the inspection with great speed and diligence.
- Children in the early years get a good start to their education. Children who join the Nursery with low starting points make very good progress and leave the Reception Year ready to join Year 1.
- The acting head of school and the executive principal of the federation have a clear view about what the school needs to do to improve.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - governors use what they know and understand about the school to hold leaders to account more effectively
 - pupil premium funding is used more effectively to ensure that disadvantaged pupils make consistently good progress
 - middle leaders have a greater impact on improving the quality of teaching and learning.
- Improve the quality of teaching and pupils' outcomes by ensuring that:
 - all adults have a positive impact on developing pupils' learning
 - planned learning across the whole curriculum, including for subjects such as art, and history, ensures that pupils make good progress
 - pupils in key stage 1 who are not working at expected levels make better progress to catch up with their peers
 - pupils in all year groups make good progress from their starting points, particularly in English.

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Leaders over time have not had an accurate view about what the school is doing well and which aspects of the school's work require improvement. Interim leaders know what steps need to be taken to ensure that the school is good.
- Middle leaders have not always been sure what is expected of them. They are beginning to spend time in classrooms to get a better understanding about teaching and learning across the school. However, there has been too much focus on what the adults are doing and not enough insight into the difference that adults are making to pupils' learning. Interim leaders are aware of this. Middle leaders are now clearer about their roles and feel well supported.
- Staff performance has not been managed well enough. Teachers have not been held properly to account for the progress that pupils are expected to make. Over time, some staff have not felt well supported by some leaders.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced. Older pupils talk with excitement about the science experiments they have undertaken, the Friday enrichment clubs, and events such as World Book Day. However, pupils also feel some subjects are repetitive and that they merely learn the same things again and again through their time in the school. Work in pupils' books highlights that planned learning in subjects such as art, history and religious education is not as stimulating or challenging as it could be.
- Leaders do not use pupil premium funding as effectively as they could. Leaders have not always had a clear view of the impact of the spending because they have not considered the progress of disadvantaged pupils compared to other pupils nationally with the same starting points. As a result, key documents, such as the school's evaluation of its own performance, are not accurate. Current plans to spend additional funding are not as clear as they should be about the difference it will make to disadvantaged pupils' progress.
- Additional funding to support pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is not used as well as it could be. As a result, some pupils make good progress but others do not.
- Leaders over time have not systematically recorded incidents of bullying, racist comments or poor behaviour. Consequently, governors are not always given accurate information. Leaders over time have not had an overview of the behaviour and well-being of pupils across the school. Interim leaders now have effective systems in place.
- Sports funding is used effectively. Consequently, pupils' participation in competitive sports has increased.
- Staff and parents are positive about the work of interim leaders.
- The local authority has a very clear view of the school's strengths and weaknesses.
- The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is effective. Pupils know and understand the school's values. They show care towards each other and their school environment.
- Pupils play a role in the leadership of the school. Consequently, pupils get many

opportunities to see democracy in action through the various elections that are held. Older pupils talk with clarity about the need to be tolerant of others. Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.

Governance of the school

- Governors play a significant role in keeping pupils safe. They were tenacious in ensuring that the local authority undertook a review of safeguarding at the school and that recommendations were actioned by leaders. Governors ensure that very important policies, such as whistleblowing, are known, understood and used effectively.
- Governors have not been as effective as they could be in holding leaders to account for the progress that pupils are making, including children in the early years and disadvantaged pupils across the school. Governors have not been strong enough in their challenge to school leaders over time. However, governors are beginning to use their time in school effectively to talk with staff and pupils to get first-hand information that can then be used to question leaders more effectively.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders and governors have created an open and safe culture in the school. Assessment of potential risks during educational visits are detailed and as a result staff ensure that pupils are safe.
- Interim leaders and designated staff with a responsibility for safeguarding who work across the federation acted with great haste, tenacity and professionalism to rectify shortcomings in the leadership of safeguarding that emerged during this inspection.
- Leaders now have clear and well-organised logs of all concerns about pupils' well-being. They have ensured that all communication with other agencies, such as Early Help is appropriately recorded. Every concern is clearly followed up and leaders have diligently recorded the decisions they have made about whether those concerns should be passed on to other agencies or not.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Time in lessons is not always used as well as it could be. Adults in classrooms do not always have a clear role or purpose.
- Staff do not always help pupils recognise errors in their work quickly enough. As a result, sometimes pupils repeat the same mistakes over time and this impacts on their progress.
- Teachers are not as effective as they could be in supporting pupils in key stage 1 to develop their spelling and use of punctuation. Consequently, pupils who can find spelling and writing difficult do not make as much progress as they could.
- The quality of teaching and learning across the curriculum in subjects other than English and mathematics is not consistent. Teachers are not always clear about what specific subject knowledge and skills pupils are developing in subjects such as art and

history.

- The use of reading records is inconsistent. Some pupils feel they read to adults often but others do not. Older pupils are not always able to comprehend what they are reading well enough. Pupils in Year 6 would like more challenging and interesting books in the library.
- Some teaching assistants are highly effective in supporting pupils' learning. They are able to check pupils' understanding and help pupils make good progress. However, this is not consistent across the school.
- The teaching of mathematics is more effective than it has been previously. Pupils are given good opportunities to solve problems and develop their mathematical reasoning.
- The teaching of science, particularly in key stage 2, is good. Pupils are given a range of opportunities to work scientifically as they undertake practical investigations, observe closely and form conclusions.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils take great pride in their work. During the inspection, pupils in Year 2 demonstrated an insatiable appetite to share their work with visitors.
- Pupils say they feel safe in school. They trust adults, including interim leaders, to help them solve any problems they may have. Pupils understand how to keep themselves safe, including when online.
- Pupils know what bullying is and what it is not. Older pupils, for instance, know what homophobic bullying is and are clear that it does not happen in their school. Pupils are consistent in their view that infrequent bullying or use of racist language is dealt with promptly by adults.
- Older pupils value the opportunities they are given to play an active part in running aspects of school life. For example, pupils take pride in the Friday assemblies that they organise, prepare for and deliver.
- Year 6 pupils, including the most vulnerable, are well supported in their transition to secondary school. Leaders think carefully about the additional support that some pupils will need to ensure they get off to a good start in Year 7.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Classrooms are calm and purposeful places to learn. Pupils who can find it difficult to manage their own behaviour are well supported. Occasionally, pupils are not as focused on their work as they could be. However, they do not disrupt the learning of others.
- Pupils play well together at break and lunchtime. Staff provide effective additional help

for those pupils who require greater support to behave well outside of the classroom.

- Over time, more pupils are attending school regularly, including disadvantaged pupils and those who are persistently absent.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Pupils make inconsistent progress across different year groups and subjects.
- Pupils in key stage 2 who did not achieve the expected standards at the end of key stage 1 make good progress and catch up. However, pupils with lower starting points in key stage 1 do not make the same level of consistent progress.
- In 2016, at the end of key stage 2, disadvantaged pupils made significantly less progress in reading and mathematics than other pupils nationally with the same starting points. The school's performance information for current pupils shows that disadvantaged pupils' progress is inconsistent, including that of the most able disadvantaged pupils.
- The proportion of pupils at the end of Year 1 who meet the expected standard in phonics has been declining over the last three years. As a result, in 2016 the proportion meeting the Year 1 expected standard was below the national average.
- Pupils make variable progress in subjects other than English and mathematics. Pupils make good progress in science. As a result, in 2016 standards at the end of key stages 1 and 2 were good. However, pupils do not make the same good progress in subjects such as art and history. Teachers do not systematically develop pupils' knowledge and skills over time.
- Pupils' progress in reading and writing is inconsistent, including that of those pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- In 2015 and 2016, key stage 2 pupils did not make good progress in mathematics. Current pupils are making better progress because mathematics teaching is now more effective.

Early years provision

Good

- Children in the Nursery and Reception Year make good progress, including those who are disadvantaged and the most able.
- Children who start Nursery with language, knowledge and skills that are below those typical for their age make very good progress through the two years they are in the early years. Consequently, children are well prepared and ready to start Year 1.
- Staff have high expectations of children. Children quickly learn the routines of the day and behave well. The personal, social and emotional development of children in the early years is good.
- Teaching and learning is good. Staff make accurate assessments about what children know and can do and use this information to plan learning. The learning environment enables children to access a broad and balanced curriculum.
- Staff work well with parents. Parents make valuable contributions to their child's

assessments over time, including bringing in and sharing their 'wow moments' from home. Transition for children starting Nursery and/or Reception are good. Staff work closely with other professionals, such as speech and language therapists, to ensure that children who require additional support settle quickly and make good progress.

- Governors and school leaders are not as clear as they should be about the progress that children make in all areas of the curriculum.

School details

Unique reference number	118575
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10034185

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	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	197
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sue Mason
Headteacher	Jo Powell
Telephone number	01732 350601
Website	www.long-mead.kent.sch.uk
Email address	office@long-mead.kent.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	23–24 January 2014

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- Long Mead is part of the Tonbridge Federation.
- The headteacher was not present during the inspection. The assistant principal is the acting head of school.
- 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 smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The school has a much higher proportion of disadvantaged pupils compared to other schools nationally.

- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is less than the national average.
- Many more pupils join and leave the school in between Reception and Year 6 than in other schools nationally.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning throughout the school, sometimes 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 governing body, and the local authority. Documents relating to governance were reviewed.
- Parents' views were considered through the 49 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, and in conversations with parents at the beginning of both school days.
- The views of staff were considered through the 24 responses to Ofsted's staff survey, and through meetings.
- Pupils' views were heard through meetings with different groups of pupils 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 information relating to 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
Anne Allen	Ofsted Inspector
Doug Brawley	Ofsted Inspector

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