

Wateringbury Church of England Primary School

147 Bow Road, Wateringbury, Maidstone, Kent ME18 5EA

Inspection dates

8–9 November 2017

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
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	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The headteacher provides very effective and inspiring leadership for the school. With senior leaders and governors, she has taken successful action to improve the school since its last inspection.
- Leaders, staff and governors share the vision, ambition and determination to provide the best possible learning experiences for pupils. As a result, the quality of teaching and learning, pupils' outcomes and behaviour are now good.
- Teaching and learning are typically good across key stages 1 and 2. Consequently, most pupils reach the expected standards in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 2. By the end of Year 6 in 2017, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics was above that found nationally.
- Fewer pupils reach greater depth in writing by the end of Year 6 than in reading or mathematics. Pupils do not always have a clear purpose for their writing or understand that the skills they learn can enhance their writing across the curriculum.
- Children get a good start in the early years. They make good progress from their starting points and are well prepared to continue learning in Year 1.
- Pupils make good progress generally, although it is a little uneven across the classes. Sometimes pupils of different abilities are not challenged as well as they could be to gain a greater depth of knowledge, skills and understanding.
- Pupils are friendly, polite and respectful of adults and each other. They feel safe in school and say they are confident to turn to adults should any problems arise.
- Behaviour is good. Pupils have very positive attitudes to learning and enjoy all they do at school.
- Sometimes teachers do not make the most of pupils' good attitudes and their good behaviour. Pupils do not have enough opportunities to be resourceful and take more responsibility for their own learning.
- Governance is strong and very effective. Governors ensure that leaders are held fully to account for the school's performance.
- One parent expressed the views of many with the comment, 'Wateringbury School is a great part of the community. Both of my children are very happy there.'

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that pupils of all abilities are challenged to achieve a greater depth of understanding in their learning.
- Provide pupils with greater opportunities to make decisions, take risks with their learning and become more resourceful learners.
- Make sure that pupils are clear about the purpose and audience for their writing and provide them with more opportunities to apply their writing skills across the wider curriculum.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher, senior leaders and governors continue to provide strong leadership for the school, as reported in the previous inspection. As a consequence, the school has improved and pupils now receive a good education at Wateringbury.
- The headteacher has secured the confidence of parents, staff and governors in her leadership. One parent echoed the views of many with the comment, 'The school goes from strength to strength under the leadership of the headteacher and I fully support the structural and personnel changes that she has successfully implemented.'
- The headteacher works tirelessly and with unwavering determination to provide the best for pupils. Her vision, ambition and aspirations are shared by governors and staff. Responses to their survey demonstrate that staff have every confidence in the leadership and are proud to work at the school. All staff feel they are treated fairly and with respect, are well supported, are proud of their school and enjoy working there.
- The performance of the school is monitored effectively, which gives senior leaders a clear steer for further improvement. Leaders at all levels, including governors, work together well to bring about improvements. The role of subject leaders, an issue for improvement in the previous inspection, has developed. Leaders know their subjects well, and the strengths and areas for further development, through a range of effective monitoring activities. Expectations for leaders are very clear. It is acknowledged that there is more scope for them to have an even greater impact on pupils' outcomes.
- There have been considerable changes in staffing since the previous inspection, which have been challenging for leaders. Nevertheless, the focus on improving the quality of teaching and learning has been a priority, and where weaknesses are identified, support is provided and improvement is expected. The headteacher is committed to developing the skills and expertise of staff, including their capacity for leadership. Teachers and teaching assistants benefit from training and coaching in a supportive, positive ethos.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced and provides rich and varied learning opportunities. Activities are planned around themes, which are chosen carefully to meet pupils' needs as well as their interests. The curriculum is enriched by special, themed weeks and events, and a range of clubs. There is a good mix of activities offered through the clubs, including sports, music and drama activities.
- Motivating visits are planned to provide memorable learning experiences. Year 1 pupils, for example, were very enthusiastic about their visit to an aquarium, which took place during the inspection. A group agreed with one pupil who said, 'It was better learning for us to go and see the fish. It was exciting to see them.' The visit inspired pupils' writing and helped them learn to use adjectives, for example, 'The seahorse was white, curly, small, spiky and had a long nose.' Outdoor learning is important in the school, as are opportunities for pupils to learn about healthy lifestyles through gardening, cooking and regular exercise.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and their understanding of

fundamental British values are threaded well through the curriculum, the school's values and the culture within the school. Pupils learn about and celebrate different faiths and cultures. Respect and tolerance are fostered effectively. In their questionnaire, pupils agreed that the school encourages them to respect people from other backgrounds and to treat everyone equally.

- The pupil premium funding is spent effectively to support the needs of the small number of disadvantaged pupils. There are clear actions to support the progress of individual pupils. Senior leaders carefully check any differences in achievement between disadvantaged pupils, including those who are the most able, and other pupils nationally. This ensures that these pupils learn well. Their progress is improving and is similar to the progress of other pupils.
- Good use is made of the primary physical education and sport funding. It is spent in a range of ways to enhance the existing good provision, including increasing the range of sports offered to pupils and providing more clubs and increased opportunities for pupils to participate in inter-school competitions. Sports specialists work with teachers and pupils to enhance their skills, leading to improved outcomes for pupils.
- Additional funding is used effectively to ensure that pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities are appropriately supported and make good progress. Good leadership ensures that any specific needs are identified at an early stage, and the range of effective interventions and specialist provision, where appropriate, fully meets pupils' needs.

Governance of the school

- Governance is strong and very effective. The governing body has made a significant contribution to school improvement since the previous inspection and shares the vision and ambition for the school's future. Governors have a strong influence on the strategic direction of the school. They have a wide range of experience, skills and expertise. They know the school very well and have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and areas that need further improvement.
- Governors are very well informed by their own monitoring activities that are directly linked to the school improvement plan. They know the right questions to ask to understand how well the school is doing compared to schools nationally. They are rigorous in holding the headteacher and other leaders to account for the school's performance, and provide an appropriate balance of challenge and support.
- Governors are well known to staff, parents and pupils. Governors actively seek the views of staff and parents. Every subject has a link governor, and subject leaders say they welcome the support and challenge that this provides.
- Governors have a good knowledge of the information about pupils' achievement. This enables them to question the progress and attainment of different groups. They check that additional funding, such as the pupil premium grant, sport funding and funding for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities, is spent wisely and is making a difference to pupils' outcomes.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The headteacher, deputy headteacher and the special educational needs leader all have up-to-date training as designated safeguarding leaders. They ensure that one of them is always on-site so that staff know who to go to if they have any concerns.
- Staff receive regular training and are kept up to date with any new requirements. All staff are aware of their responsibility to keep pupils safe, and are vigilant in doing so. All staff know the procedures to follow should they have any concerns, and also know what to be aware of to ensure that pupils are protected.
- There is a strong culture of care at the school, and the school's ethos and values promote all aspects of safeguarding very well.
- The school site is secure and all visitors are checked in. Appropriate risk assessments are carried out, including for when pupils go on trips.
- All the required information is recorded to ensure the suitability of adults to work with pupils.
- All staff and most parents agree that children feel safe at school.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teaching has improved since the previous inspection and is now typically good. As a result, pupils are making better progress in their learning. Teachers and teaching assistants share their expertise and learn from each other. They work very hard and are enthusiastic and willing to enhance their skills to benefit pupils' learning.
- Teachers and teaching assistants are good role models for pupils and promote respectful, caring and positive relationships. Pupils are mostly very attentive in class. They listen to their teachers and each other, and consider the views of others even if they do not necessarily agree with them.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to learning. They enjoy all they do, work hard and want to do well. Their good behaviour supports their learning well. One parent wrote, 'The children are encouraged to enjoy learning and to explore different ways of finding the ways they work best.'
- Sometimes teachers do not make the most of the pupils' good attributes. They do not always give pupils opportunities to take more of a lead in their learning by being more resourceful and making their own decisions about how to tackle and resolve problems.
- Phonic skills are taught well and used effectively by pupils to help them read unfamiliar words. These skills get them off to a good start in the early years and key stage 1.
- Reading is taught well and, as a result, pupils' progress in reading improved significantly in 2017 from the previous year. Reading for enjoyment is promoted well. Teachers ensure that pupils are introduced to a good range of quality texts, which motivate and inspire pupils to read for pleasure.
- Since the previous inspection, pupils' presentation and handwriting skills have

improved. Pupils enjoy and welcome the school's approach, which provides them with opportunities to talk with teachers and each other about writing before committing their ideas to paper. However, teachers do not always make sure that pupils are clear about the purpose of their writing. Pupils do not always use particular skills they are learning to improve the quality of what and how they write in subjects across the curriculum as well as in English lessons.

- There is a continuing focus on aspects of mathematics to further develop teaching and learning of reasoning skills.
- Classrooms are well organised for learning. Good-quality and attractive displays support teaching and learning and celebrate pupils' achievements.
- Teachers use questioning well to encourage pupils to think about and extend their learning. Leaders have correctly identified, however, that pupils of all abilities could be challenged further to learn with a deeper level of understanding.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils are friendly, polite, respectful and caring to each other, to staff and to visitors. Most pupils agree that the school encourages them to respect people from other backgrounds and to treat everyone equally. Pupils know that any unkindness, language or actions that may cause offence will not be tolerated.
- Pupils enjoy school and want to do well. They have positive attitudes to learning, which help them make good progress.
- Pupils uphold and promote the school values and they have good role models in the staff.
- Good support is provided for pupils' social and emotional development as well as their academic achievement. Pupils who may be vulnerable, together with their families, are identified and supported sensitively and effectively.
- In discussions, and in response to the pupil survey, most pupils say they feel safe in school. They know how to keep themselves safe in a range of situations in and out of school, including using the internet safely. Most parents who responded to the Ofsted questionnaire, Parent View, agreed that their children are happy and well looked after.
- Pupils are encouraged to understand and adopt healthy lifestyles. They learn about healthy eating during cookery sessions and through growing their own food, and all pupils run or walk a mile at least three times a week.
- Pupils say that they are not aware of any bullying in school. They know that bullying can take different forms and are confident that should any problems arise, teachers and other adults in school would listen to them and help them.
- Pupils enjoy the responsibilities they are given and take them seriously. Play leaders, monitors and junior governors, for example, all carry out their duties sensibly. Older pupils enjoy working and playing with younger pupils and are good role models for

them.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils conduct themselves well in the playground, at lunchtimes and around the school.
- Behaviour in lessons is mostly good. Pupils are usually attentive, work hard and concentrate well, which helps them make good progress. Lessons are very rarely disrupted by inappropriate behaviour. Occasionally, when pupils do not have sufficient challenge and they are not fully involved, they can become distracted, do not listen as well as they should and lose their focus on learning.
- Most parents who responded to Parent View agree that the school makes sure that pupils are well behaved, and staff agree that behaviour is good.
- Attendance has improved and is above average. Leaders keep a close track on the attendance of different groups and work hard to successfully improve the attendance of some individual pupils where necessary.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Most pupils reached at least the expected standards for their age by the end of Year 2 in 2017, and the proportion reaching 'greater depth' in reading, writing and mathematics was broadly in line with the national figure.
- In 2017, progress between the end of Year 2 and the end of Year 6 was not significantly different from that found nationally overall, but it was much stronger in reading than in writing or mathematics.
- The proportion of pupils who reached the expected standards for their ages by the end of Year 6 in 2017 was above that found nationally in reading, writing and mathematics. The proportion increased from 2016 in reading and mathematics but dipped in writing.
- The proportion reaching the higher standard in 2017 also improved from the previous year. It was above age-related expectations in mathematics, and well above the national figure in reading. The proportion of pupils reaching greater depth in writing improved a little from 2016 but was below the national figure.
- The school's assessments and pupils' work indicate that while current progress is generally good, it is uneven across the year groups. Leaders are keenly aware, for example, that pupils in Years 5 and 6 will need to make faster progress to achieve their end-of-year targets. Action has already been taken to ensure that this happens.
- The most able pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, make good progress. The proportions that reached greater depth in learning by the end of Year 2 were above that found nationally in reading, writing and mathematics. The proportions reaching the higher standards by the end of Year 6 were above that found nationally in mathematics, and considerably so in reading. The proportion was below the national figure in writing.

- In 2016 and 2017, there were too few disadvantaged pupils in Year 6 to comment in detail on their progress and attainment. However, the achievement of disadvantaged pupils across the school has been a focus for leaders and disadvantaged pupils are making similar progress to others as a result.
- The proportion of pupils who reached the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check in 2017 improved from the previous year and was above average.

Early years provision

Good

- Children start in the early years with skills and knowledge that are generally typical for their age. Children, including those who are disadvantaged and those who have SEN and/or disabilities, make good progress in the Reception Year and are well prepared to continue their learning in Year 1.
- The proportion of children achieving a good level of development by the end of the early years has been above that found nationally for the past four years.
- The deputy headteacher works closely and effectively with the Reception class teacher to oversee the leadership of the early years. The provision and the learning environment have improved since the previous inspection, and the local authority has provided good support to help bring about these improvements. There is an accurate view of the strengths in the provision and areas for further development. Leaders are correctly aware that there is scope to further develop the outdoor area to provide even more opportunities for children to learn.
- Teaching and learning are good. Staff work together as a strong team and provide a happy, safe and nurturing atmosphere. Adults engage children well in learning activities, which are well planned to match the needs and interests of the children. Children were very proud to share, for example, what they had learned about owls, 'They live in nests and eat worms.'
- The early years team knows the children well and has very positive relationships with them. As a result, children are happy, settle well into the routines of the day and develop their confidence and independence. They behave well and feel safe. They share and cooperate, and play and learn well together.
- Parents are very happy with the provision for their children. One parent commented, 'My child feels so welcome and enjoys his time at school so much that he walks in confidently and happily each morning. From our first interaction with the teaching staff, it became clear that the well-being of the children, and driving that inherent passion to learn, was their focus. They are an impressive team.'
- There are good procedures for getting to know the children and their families to ensure a smooth start to school. One parent wrote, 'During my child's three transition visits, she came back on each occasion and wanted to know when she could go again. The staff had made a lasting impression on her and she could not wait to start school.' There are continuing strong links with parents so that home and school can work effectively together to support children's learning. All the necessary steps are taken to support any children whose circumstances may make them vulnerable.

School details

Unique reference number	118632
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10024525

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	5 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	199
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Chris Clark
Headteacher	Chasey Crawford Usher
Telephone number	01622 812 199
Website	www.wateringbury.kent.sch.uk
Email address	headteacher@wateringbury.kent.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	4–5 February 2015

Information about this school

- Wateringbury is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is below average.
- The proportion of pupils supported through the pupil premium funding is below average.
- There is provision for the early years in a Reception class, which children attend full time.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics.

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors conducted learning walks and observed learning in all classes, mostly with the headteacher. They examined work in a sample of pupils' books.
- Inspectors talked to pupils about their learning and listened to some pupils read. They observed pupils in the playground and at lunchtimes.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher and other staff with key leadership responsibilities. Meetings were held with governors and the local authority school improvement adviser.
- Inspectors examined a wide range of documents including: leaders' checks on the school's performance and the quality of teaching; the school improvement plan; information on pupils' progress; and records relating to attendance, behaviour and safeguarding.
- Inspectors considered the 98 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, which included 31 written responses. An inspector also spoke to some parents at the start of the school day. Inspectors took account of 12 responses to the questionnaire for staff and 95 responses to the pupil survey.

Inspection team

Margaret Coussins, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Neil Small	Ofsted Inspector

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