

# Lydd Primary School

20 Skinner Road, Lydd, Romney Marsh, Kent TN29 9HW

## Inspection dates

21–22 March 2018

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
Effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>Good</b>
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	<b>Good</b>
Outcomes for pupils	<b>Good</b>
Early years provision	<b>Outstanding</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- This is a good school. Since opening in 2015, the school has gone from strength to strength.
- Leaders recognise the potential of the staff and have worked with the multi-academy trust to provide excellent support for staff at all levels. Middle leaders, in particular, are thriving.
- Pupils are well behaved and show great respect for adults and each other. They work hard in lessons and demonstrate positive attitudes to learning.
- Teachers skilfully guide pupils to write interesting texts which demonstrate their understanding of punctuation and grammar. Leaders recognise that spelling remains a weakness.
- Pupils use their secure calculation skills to solve complex problems in mathematics. They think and reason well. Increasingly, pupils attain high standards in mathematics.
- Pupils are exceptionally polite, friendly and courteous. They appreciate the strong moral values that the school instils and try their very best in class. The personal development and welfare of pupils are outstanding.
- The new special educational needs coordinators (SENCOs) work closely with teachers to identify, plan for and support pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities. These pupils make strong progress.
- The achievements of disadvantaged pupils are monitored closely by leaders. When progress dips, leaders respond quickly, using additional funding to provide tailored support for pupils. The progress of disadvantaged pupils is strong and accelerating.
- Pupils enjoy a broad and interesting curriculum. However, standards of writing in foundation subjects are not as high as those in English.
- High-quality teaching in the early years ensures that pupils make a great start to their education. Children enjoy positive relationships with staff and are well prepared to start formal education in Year 1. The early years provision is outstanding.
- Pupils' attendance has improved recently. Nevertheless, rates of absence remain too high.

## **Full report**

### **What does the school need to do to improve further?**

- Improve outcomes for pupils by raising the standards of writing across the curriculum to match the high standards evident in pupils' English books.
- Reduce the level of absence to raise the attendance of all pupils, particularly those who are disadvantaged.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

**Good**

- The headteacher, ably assisted by the deputy headteacher, has provided strong leadership during a time of significant change for the whole school community. Her drive to improve the quality of teaching and outcomes for pupils has had a profoundly positive impact on the quality of education. The school is now good.
- Since the school converted to an academy in 2015, leaders have worked closely with officers from the multi-academy trust. They have successfully eradicated inadequate teaching and provided strong support for the staff of the school. The balance of training and challenge from the multi-academy trust provides useful additional support for senior leaders, who are well placed to drive further improvement.
- Leaders have a clear and detailed understanding of the quality of teaching, learning and assessment because they check teachers' performance regularly. Leaders have supported teachers and support staff to do better and have galvanised a strong team. Records show that staff's pay is closely linked to their performance. As a result, the quality of teaching, learning and assessment has improved.
- Middle leaders receive useful training from the multi-academy trust. Staff feel that their development is valued by senior leaders and they feel empowered to achieve their best. The impact of middle leaders on school improvement has increased markedly, resulting in a notable rise in pupils' outcomes.
- Additional funding to increase the progress of disadvantaged pupils is used particularly well. Leaders carefully monitor the achievement of disadvantaged pupils and look for meaningful ways to accelerate their progress further. When progress dips, leaders react quickly, putting in place focused support so that pupils keep up. Disadvantaged pupils make strong progress across the school.
- The recently appointed SENCos are capable and ambitious. They have taken time to carefully evaluate the provision for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities. They have used this information well, for example, by providing specific training for staff on the development of pupils' working memory. Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities are effectively supported and make strong progress.
- Officers from the multi-academy trust meet with staff at all levels to discuss and promote the well-being of staff. They have recently achieved a reduction in evening emails and have sharpened their processes for marking and feedback. As a result, the workload of staff has reduced and morale is high.
- The curriculum is broad and interesting. Leaders have taken care to ensure that pupils develop their skills in the arts, sport and humanities subjects. For example, Year 6 pupils combined their mathematical and artistic skills to make interesting 'magic eye' puzzles. Pupils in Year 5 wrote play scripts about detectives and acted these out 'on camera', editing their own work to make short films. Pupils enjoy the wide range of trips and visits that help bring their learning to life. Nevertheless, the standard of pupils' writing in the foundation subjects does not match the high standard seen in English lessons.
- The multi-academy trust provides strong support for the school. Trust officers have

worked with the governing body to recruit and support a strong and effective leadership team. Officers provide ongoing support, most recently for middle leaders, by facilitating specific training and providing opportunities to work with successful leaders in other schools. The ongoing support of officers and their quality assurance processes leave the school well placed to improve further.

## **Governance of the school**

- Governors are skilled and ambitious. They collect meaningful, first-hand information to help them evaluate the performance of the school. For example, governors look in detail at the outcomes for pupils, including those who are disadvantaged. They work with leaders to ensure that resources are allocated to where they are needed most. The governors' assessment of the school's effectiveness is accurate.
- The governing body monitors the effectiveness of leaders' work well. Governors visit the school to satisfy themselves that systems are working. For example, governors interview staff about the effectiveness of training they have received and suggest to leaders how systems may be improved further. Oversight of governors has supported leaders to secure rapid improvement.

## **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Staff receive regular training to keep them up to date with national and local safeguarding issues. They are skilled at identifying and reporting concerns. When reported to leaders, concerns are dealt with quickly and the appropriate support is put in place to help keep pupils safe from harm.
- Thorough recruitment and background checks are carried out on all staff, volunteers and regular visitors before they can work in school. All safeguarding procedures and recording systems are closely monitored.
- Pupils know how to keep themselves safe. They enjoy the regular opportunities to discuss staying safe and speak confidently of the lessons they have learned. For example, pupils recently worked with officers from the NSPCC, learning important messages about staying safe from harm. They also learned a dance to remind them of the telephone number for ChildLine. Parents and carers receive valuable support to help keep their children safe. For example, parents recently attended an online safety workshop, focused on promoting positive attitudes to technology and being able to select age-appropriate games and apps for their children to use.

## **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment**

**Good**

- Staff across the school are ambitious for pupils. Teachers know their pupils well and set work at just the right levels. This has enabled all pupils, particularly the most able, to make strong progress and achieve well.
- In mathematics, pupils solve problems using their secure calculation skills. Tasks are appropriately challenging and enjoyed by pupils. As a result, pupils make strong

progress in mathematics.

- The investment made by leaders to improve the questioning skills of staff has paid off. Teachers use questions to probe pupils' understanding and offer them additional challenge. Teachers use pupils' responses to set work at the right level. When pupils fall behind, they are identified quickly and given the support they need to catch up.
- Additional support is aimed at pupils of all abilities. The work of teaching assistants to stretch the most able and most-able disadvantaged pupils to achieve at a higher standard has been particularly successful. Teaching assistants contribute well to pupils' development and progress.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities are supported well. Teachers and leaders work hard to ensure that the needs of these pupils are quickly identified so that barriers to learning are addressed. Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities make strong progress from their starting points.
- Teachers possess in-depth subject knowledge and deliver interesting and exciting lessons in subjects such as music, art and physical education. Nevertheless, the standard of pupils' writing and spelling in their work in foundation subjects does not consistently reflect the high standards evident in English.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Good**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Pupils show strong moral purpose. They believe in helping others and recognise the kindness that others show them. For instance, after a recent trip to a local museum, pupils wrote to the proprietors to thank their hosts for their hospitality. Pupils have reflected on how they can reduce waste and have considered their own impact on the planet. The appreciation and respect shown towards their community and others in the school are palpable.
- Pupils enjoy a wide range of responsibilities. For example, they run the tuck shop and lead assemblies on subjects such as kindness and respect. Pupils are recognised for their efforts and feel considerable pride when awarded trophies in assembly such as the 'kindness cup' and 'kings of the corridor'.
- Pupils reported that teachers and teaching assistants are kind. They feel well supported by adults, particularly the family liaison officer. Pupils described a recent assembly in which they considered how they could 'live our lives without harming others'. Pupils are adamant that there is no bullying in school, but they are clear about what they would do if they had a concern.
- Pupils are confident and self-assured. They enter classrooms in a calm and appropriate manner and start their work quickly. Pupils collaborate well in lessons and are respectful of each other's ideas and contributions. As a result, lessons are calm and purposeful.

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Behaviour ambassadors visit classrooms, assessing pupils' learning behaviour on a regular basis, and offer feedback to their peers. Pupils are proud of their behaviour and work well together.
- Peer mediators help their peers to solve their problems when they arise. They are well trained and trusted by pupils throughout the school. As a result, pupils are able to articulate their problems clearly and find resolutions.
- Pupils show a strong awareness of online safety. They know how to keep their personal information safe online and how to report concerns. Pupils are well prepared to be safe and responsible digital citizens.
- While the attendance of all pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, is improving, levels of absence are higher than the national average. Leaders have taken action to support and challenge families to get their children to school more regularly. Nevertheless, some parents do not share leaders' high aspirations for the regular attendance of their children.

### Outcomes for pupils

**Good**

- In 2017, the proportion of Year 6 pupils who attained the expected standards in reading, writing and mathematics was above the national average.
- In 2016, the proportion of pupils who reached the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check was well below the national average. Leaders, rightly, worked with staff to improve the teaching of phonics in key stage 1. As a result, the proportion of pupils who passed the Year 1 phonics check in 2017 was in line with the national average.
- Improvements in phonics teaching have supported pupils to develop strong reading skills. Pupils read regularly for research and their own pleasure. Pupils across the school make rapid progress in reading.
- In mathematics, pupils are well supported to tackle challenging problems, which require them to consider, record and think deeply about their work. Pupils undertake their tasks in a systematic and careful manner. As a result, pupils, including the most able, make strong progress in mathematics.
- Typically, pupils use their strong grammar and punctuation skills to craft interesting and lively texts. Writing is well presented and, increasingly, pupils are able to write for different purposes and audiences. Increasing proportions of pupils are attaining a high standard in writing.
- Disadvantaged pupils make strong progress and increasing proportions make accelerated progress. Leaders track these pupils carefully and, if pupils fall behind, take effective action to help them catch up. As a result, the differences in attainment between disadvantaged pupils and other pupils nationally are diminishing.
- The most able pupils achieve well in English and mathematics. Many more pupils are making very rapid progress and, as a result of raising the expectations of what pupils can achieve, attain at the higher standard.

- In some classes, pupils write well across the curriculum. For example, in Year 6, pupils wrote interesting and comical descriptions of a boiled sweet's journey through the human digestive system. Nevertheless, standards of writing and spelling in the foundation subjects do not routinely match the standards seen in English and mathematics.

## Early years provision

## Outstanding

- The proportion of children in the early years who attain a good level of development has risen steadily for the past three years and is now above the national average. Disadvantaged children are supported well and, as a result, a high proportion also achieve a good level of development. Children, including those who are disadvantaged, are exceptionally well prepared for the challenges of Year 1.
- The Nursery and Reception classes provide a calm and purposeful environment. Children enjoy the rich range of opportunities. For example, children were delighted by the appearance of tadpoles in their class tank and talked with friends and adults about the emergence of frogs. Their positive attitudes to learning give them a great start to their early education.
- Adults know the children well and encourage them to develop their key skills. For example, staff helped children to make their own breakfast. Children carefully cut their toast soldiers to the correct width for their eggs and politely shared their cutlery and crockery. Behaviour in early years is consistently calm and purposeful.
- Many children enter the setting with levels of speech and language typically below those of their peers nationally. Adults support these children well, listening carefully and helping children to pronounce words correctly. By the time they leave Reception, children's speech and language levels have improved markedly and exceed the national average. This represents excellent progress from starting points.
- Teachers and support staff offer strong support for children who have SEN and/or disabilities. Adults know the children well and offer just the right support to help them share, learn and play with their peers. As a result, children who have SEN and/or disabilities make strong progress in early years.
- Excellent collaboration between the early years leader and the multi-academy trust has ensured that the early years provision has improved. The multi-academy trust has provided training for staff and helped to increase parental engagement. Officers from the multi-academy trust now use the early years provision as an example of good practice for their other schools.
- Careful tracking ensures that leaders are able to quickly identify any children who fall behind and offer support to help these children so they catch up. Moderation with other schools has helped to ensure that assessments are accurate. As a result, children in early years make strong progress.
- Links with external agencies are strong. Parents are helped to engage with agencies to access the support their children need. The safeguarding procedures in early years match the strong practice seen across the rest of the school.

## School details

Unique reference number	141660
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10040905

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	260
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Petra Benstead
Headteacher	Nicki Man
Telephone number	01797 320362
Website	<a href="http://www.lydd.kent.sch.uk">www.lydd.kent.sch.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:office@lydd.kent.sch.uk">office@lydd.kent.sch.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- The Lydd Primary School opened in September 2015 as part of the Village Academy Trust, a larger-than-average primary-only multi-academy trust.
- The school does not comply with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish.
- This is an average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils who are supported by the pupil premium is higher than the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is slightly lower than the national average.
- The school met the government's floor standard in 2017, which is the minimum requirement for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.



## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in 16 parts of lessons, all with senior leaders.
- In addition to discussions with parents, nine responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, were taken into account, including seven free-text comments.
- A range of the school's documentation was scrutinised to gather information on: leaders' evaluation of the school's performance; systems for managing the performance of teachers; the behaviour and safety of pupils; safeguarding; the progress and attainment of pupils; and curriculum leadership.
- Inspectors scrutinised the school's website to evaluate the quality of information for parents and whether the school meets statutory publishing requirements.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils to gather their views and heard pupils read.
- Inspectors met with school leaders, representatives from the governing body and officers from the multi-academy trust.

## Inspection team

Dan Lambert, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Helen Tait	Ofsted Inspector
Lynn Lawrence	Ofsted Inspector
Teresa Davies	Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate  
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Manchester  
M1 2WD

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Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
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