

Lyminge Church of England Primary School

Church Road, Lyminge, Folkestone, Kent CT18 8JA

Inspection dates

17–18 July 2018

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- In her relatively short time at the school, the headteacher's very good leadership has brought about much improvement. She has successfully reversed the school's decline.
- The headteacher is ably supported by senior leaders. She has won the approval and backing of staff, governors and the school's community.
- Attainment at the end of key stage 1 is well above the national average in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils' attainment in writing at the end of key stage 2 is high. Attainment in reading is above the national average.
- The early years is very well led and teaching is outstanding. Achievement is very high and many children exceed the early learning goals by the end of their year in Reception.
- Teaching is particularly strong in key stage 1 and there are some strengths in key stage 2. However, some teachers in key stage 2 do not plan tasks that meet the needs of all groups of pupils, including the most able.
- Pupils understand and live by the school's Christian values, demonstrating kindness and trust in their behaviour towards others. Governors are knowledgeable, skilled and hold leaders to account very effectively.
- The school's partnership with parents and carers is very strong. Parents are overwhelmingly positive in their praise of the school.
- Pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare are outstanding, including in the early years. Pupils have excellent attitudes to learning.
- Targets and success criteria in improvement and action plans are not precise enough. Leaders have not fully evaluated the impact of their support for disadvantaged pupils.
- Some middle leaders are new to their roles and do not yet play a full role in school improvement.
- Standards in mathematics at the end of key stage 2 are just below the national averages. Too few pupils attain the higher standard.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Strengthen teaching and learning in key stage 2 by ensuring that:
 - teachers more consistently take account of pupils' prior learning to plan tasks that meet the needs of all groups, including the lower-attaining and the most able pupils
 - teachers' expectations are consistently high, especially of the most able pupils.
- Improve attainment in mathematics in key stage 2 so that larger proportions of pupils attain the expected and higher standards.
- Strengthen leadership and management further by:
 - developing the role of middle leaders so that they contribute more fully to improving outcomes for pupils
 - evaluating more precisely the impact of the spending of the pupil premium funding for disadvantaged pupils
 - sharpening targets and success criteria in improvement and action plans so that leaders and governors can more precisely evaluate the impact of their actions.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher leads the school with drive, passion and energy. She is ably supported by senior leaders and together they form a united, strong team. Prior to the headteacher's appointment in April 2017, the school had been through a very turbulent period and the quality of education had declined considerably. Her very effective leadership has reversed the school's decline and she has gained the full confidence of staff, governors and parents.
- Leaders have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and where further improvement is needed. They keep the quality of teaching under close review. Leaders have introduced a new assessment system so all staff can track how well pupils are learning. Leaders hold staff to account effectively for pupils' progress.
- The headteacher has involved everyone in school in reshaping the school's values, which underpin and give direction to their work. The school's improvement and action plans identify the right priorities. However, the targets in these plans lack the precision needed to enable leaders and governors to fully evaluate their impact.
- Senior leaders have introduced many positive changes to improve the quality of teaching and raise standards in key stage 2. As a result, teaching has improved. Also, there has been a considerable uplift in the key stage 2 unvalidated results for 2018, particularly in reading and writing.
- The special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) leads the school's provision for pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities well. She has established new systems so that pupils who may have SEN and/or disabilities can be identified early and support put in place promptly. The SENCo tracks and records pupils' progress carefully.
- Some middle leaders are relatively new to role and, although hard-working and committed, do not yet contribute fully to school improvement. For example, they do not yet play a full role in evaluating pupils' progress and attainment, and the impact of teaching in different subjects.
- The additional funding for disadvantaged pupils and those who have SEN and/or disabilities is used appropriately. The majority of funding is used to provide extra support for pupils in class. The family liaison officer supports pupils and families well, particularly those pupils who have social and emotional needs. However, leaders acknowledge that they have not yet evaluated fully the impact of the support for disadvantaged pupils.
- The curriculum is suitably broad and balanced, and pupils learn in a wide range of subjects. Visits to places of interest and opportunities to take part in outdoor pursuits enrich pupils' learning. Older pupils were full of enthusiasm when talking about their recent watersports day, when they learned to kayak on the sea. Older pupils also benefit from a residential visit to France. The chance to take part in staged productions contributes very well to older pupils' enjoyment of school and their performing and musical skills.
- Extra-curricular activities, including many sporting clubs, contribute well to pupils'

enjoyment, fitness and physical education (PE) skills. The primary PE and sport premium is used well. The school has increased opportunities for pupils to participate in sport and competitive events. Guidance from sports coaches has helped to improve staff's expertise and confidence in teaching PE.

- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding is developed very well and pupils are effectively prepared for life in modern Britain. The school's distinctive Christian ethos and values, such as love and forgiveness, are woven through all of its work. The whole-school daily worship helps pupils to reflect meaningfully on these values. Provision for religious education is a strength. Pupils learn about other faiths and cultures as well as Christianity. They learn about democracy through the elections for the school council and pupils' visits to the Houses of Parliament.
- The school's partnership with parents is commendable. Parents are warmly welcomed into the school and appreciate the 'open-door' policy. They greatly value the weekly celebration assemblies and the many opportunities for coming into school to learn about their children's work. Parents feel very well informed about their children's progress and they value the way the school communicates with and involves them.

Governance of the school

- Governance is strong and governors fulfil their responsibilities very well. They bring a wide range of valuable skills to the school and hold leaders to account very effectively. Governors wisely match their skills and experience to particular roles within the governing body, for example for safeguarding and finance.
- Governors are very well informed through their regular visits to the school, during which they monitor key aspects of the improvement plan. They also regularly meet teachers and leaders to strengthen their understanding of pupils' progress and the school's developments.
- Governors attend regular training to keep their skills and knowledge up to date, including about safeguarding.
- Governors acknowledge that, currently, the school's website does not include all of the required information about the curriculum, and are taking steps to address this.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Record-keeping is systematic, detailed and provides a clear overview of actions to ensure pupils' well-being and safety. The headteacher is knowledgeable and makes sure that staff are trained and know how to identify and report any concerns. When appropriate, the headteacher makes referrals to the relevant agencies, so that pupils are kept safe.
- The school's curriculum includes suitable opportunities for pupils to learn about different aspects of safety, including road and cycle safety, online safety and 'stranger danger'. Key stage 2 pupils' regular swimming lessons help them to learn about water safety.
- Leaders and governors ensure that safeguarding is always on the agenda and have rigorous procedures in place to check this aspect of the school's work. They carry out detailed risk assessments and checks on all aspects of health and safety.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teachers have positive relationships with pupils and have established a very effective culture for learning. They are enthusiastic, engage pupils well and set learning in meaningful and interesting contexts. Routines are well established and activities flow seamlessly from one to another so that little learning time is lost.
- Phonics and reading are taught well and, as a result, pupils make good progress in reading. Teachers are knowledgeable and articulate and model sounds clearly for pupils. The school's new approach to reading means that pupils now encounter a wider range of texts and regularly complete activities to develop their comprehension skills. The school's attractive and well-stocked library promotes pupils' enjoyment of, and engagement in, reading.
- The school's consistent approach to the teaching of calculation helps pupils to develop their number skills well. Teachers provide appropriate opportunities for pupils to apply their skills to solve problems and develop and explain their reasoning. Consequently, most pupils are making good progress in mathematics. However, some older pupils in key stage 2 have not made such strong progress in mathematics, particularly the most able. This is largely because previous weaker teaching has resulted in gaps in pupils' learning.
- Teachers make sure that pupils have frequent opportunities to develop their writing skills in different subjects and for a range of purposes. Teachers set clear success criteria to help pupils understand what they need to do to be successful. Over time, pupils become fluent, confident and skilled writers.
- Teachers plan times for pupils to reflect on and improve their work. Teachers design many activities in which pupils work together cooperatively and discuss their learning. Good-quality discussions develop pupils' speaking and listening skills and enhance their learning. For example, during the inspection, some pupils animatedly discussed the benefits of, and arguments for and against, having pets in school.
- Teaching assistants support pupils well, particularly those pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities. They help pupils to keep focused in lessons and, when needed, adapt activities to meet pupils' individual needs.
- The quality of teaching is particularly strong in key stage 1 and, as a result, younger pupils achieve very well. Although teaching in key stage 2 is good overall, and there is some high-quality teaching, there is some variation in quality between year groups. Where teaching is not as strong, teachers do not have consistently high enough expectations, particularly of the most able pupils. Some teachers do not take enough account of pupils' previous learning. As a result, they set tasks which do not fully meet the needs of all groups of pupils, particularly lower-attaining pupils and the most able.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding. Pupils are confident and self-assured learners. They have a very good understanding of what they need to do to be successful, such as persevering to overcome challenges. They have highly positive attitudes to learning and thoroughly enjoy school. They take great pride in the school and their personal achievements, and value the opportunity to 'shine' in achievement assemblies and other events.
- Pupils reflect thoughtfully and give mature answers to questions, such as when discussing the school's values. As one pupil confidently explained: 'The values help us to learn to do the right thing and to make the school a better place.'
- There is plenty of scope for pupils to take on extra responsibilities, and to play their part in decision making on the school council and in improving the school. Pupils talk about the 'eco' council and how they are helping to reduce and manage the school's waste by sorting items for recycling.
- Pupils' well-being, happiness and safety are given the highest priority. Pupils who need support with their social skills are supported well by additional adults, including the family liaison officer.
- Pupils have an excellent knowledge of how to stay safe when online. They are also knowledgeable about other aspects of keeping safe, such as road and cycle safety. Pupils appreciate the importance of learning about water safety during their swimming lessons.
- Pupils feel safe at school and are entirely confident that if they have any worries, they can speak to an adult in school. They say that on the very rare occasions there are 'fall-outs' or bullying, adults sort these out very quickly. Every parent spoken to during the inspection said that their children are completely safe at school. Parents had nothing but praise for the high-quality care that the school provides.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Pupils' behaviour in class and around the school is, typically, exemplary. They know the school's expectations and respond promptly and politely to adults' requests.
- Pupils treat each other and their teachers with respect and consideration. They cooperate very well together and, during playtimes, they play very happily and sensibly. The school's records show that incidents of inappropriate behaviour are extremely rare.
- Pupils are keen to attend school and most of them rarely miss a day. In this school year, attendance is well above average.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Outcomes for pupils in key stage 1 are well above the national averages. Very strong teaching in this part of the school has enabled pupils to attain standards that are consistently high. In 2018, a very high proportion of pupils attained the greater depth in reading. Pupils consistently attain very well in the Year 1 phonics screening check.
- In 2017, there was a significant dip in attainment at the end of key stage 2 and a lower

than average proportion of pupils achieved the expected standards in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils' progress was also below average in reading. These outcomes reflect the school's earlier period of turbulence and the decline in the quality of key stage 2 teaching.

- In 2018, the unvalidated assessment information for Year 6 pupils shows substantial improvement in pupils' reading and writing. Almost half of the pupils attained the higher standard in writing. However, their progress in mathematics was not as good, and attainment, although slightly better than in 2017, remains below the national average. Very few of the most able Year 6 pupils attained the higher standard in mathematics.
- Across the school, and in the wider curriculum, the majority of pupils are making good progress. Nevertheless, there is some slight unevenness in pupils' progress across key stage 2. This reflects the variation in the quality of teaching, which leaders are taking positive action to address.
- Pupils attain particularly well in reading. Younger pupils confidently identify and blend sounds when they encounter new words. Pupils read with understanding and infer meaning. They read confidently and fluently and are familiar with different authors and types of text.
- Over time, pupils develop stamina in their writing. They adapt the style of their writing to suit specific tasks and use increasingly sophisticated sentence structures and accurate punctuation.
- In mathematics, the school's consistent approach to calculation helps pupils to become confident and adept with number. Pupils apply their skills well when solving problems.
- The school's strong provision for religious education is reflected in pupils' good achievement in this subject. Pupils talk with confidence and in detail about various Old Testament stories and the values and qualities exemplified by different biblical characters. They connect these stories to the school's values and explain maturely how these help to guide their own behaviour.
- Disadvantaged pupils and those who have SEN and/or disabilities make good progress. Pupils are supported appropriately and leaders carefully track how well they are doing.

Early years provision

Outstanding

- Children get off to a wonderful start in the early years. From their various starting points, all groups of children make excellent progress. Outcomes are well above the national averages and a very high proportion of children exceed the early learning goals. This enables children to be exceptionally well prepared for Year 1.
- Teaching is outstanding. Well-designed, stimulating and engaging activities capture children's natural curiosity and thirst for learning. The indoor and outdoor environments support children's learning very well for all aspects of the curriculum.
- The teaching of phonics and early reading is highly effective. As a result, children achieve very well and standards of reading and writing are exceptionally high. In 2018, almost half of the children in Reception exceeded the early learning goal for reading. Children read and write with confidence and apply these skills very well during child-

initiated activities. Their writing is of very high quality.

- The teaching of mathematics is equally very strong. During the week of the inspection, children confidently applied their skills to design their own tally charts to record the results of their surveys of favourite sea creatures. They applied their knowledge of counting in fives to quickly total up their results and explain which creatures were most or least popular.
- Children respond very well to adults' high expectations. Their behaviour is exemplary and they show very high levels of independence. Children are confident, enthusiastic learners and cannot wait to get started on activities, quickly becoming absorbed in their learning. Relationships are warm and nurturing, enabling children to feel settled and secure. Children are very well cared for and safeguarding is effective.
- The early years is very well led. The early years leader carries out timely observations and assessments of how well children are learning. These help to make sure that learning is always pitched accurately to meet children's needs. The early years leader keeps detailed high-quality 'learning journals' which capture and illustrate children's superb progress.
- There are comprehensive induction arrangements, including home visits and 'stay and play' sessions so that children's transition into Reception is seamless. The school's partnership and communication with parents are very good. Parents appreciate the termly workshops, when they can 'learn and play' alongside their children. Parents are effusive in their praise of the early years. One parent commented, 'It's just brilliant.'

School details

Unique reference number	118679
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10046500

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	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	199
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Tricia Stewart
Headteacher	Helen D'Cruz
Telephone number	01303 862367
Website	www.lymingeprimaryschool.co.uk/
Email address	office@lyminge.kent.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	1–2 December 2011

Information about this school

- Since the school's previous inspection, in 2011, there have been many changes of staff and leadership. The current headteacher took up her post in April 2017, following the resignation of the former headteacher who had been at the school for approximately two years. The deputy headteacher took up his post in April 2018, and the SENCo has taken responsibility for the school's special educational needs provision since January 2018.
- There is a breakfast club which is run by the school. An after-school club is run by a private company which has a separate Ofsted registration.
- The school meets the government floor standard, which is the minimum standard for pupils' attainment and progress at the end of key stage 2.
- The school does not meet requirements on the publication of information about the curriculum.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in most classes. It was not possible to observe learning in Year 6, as pupils were taking part in pre-planned events for the period of the inspection. During visits to classrooms, inspectors talked with pupils about their learning and evaluated the quality of work in pupils' books. Inspectors also listened to pupils read and met with a representative group of pupils from key stages 1 and 2.
- In addition to reviewing pupils' work in classrooms, three separate meetings were held with leaders to review the quality of pupils' work in English, mathematics and the wider curriculum.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in classrooms, during breaktime and as they moved around the school. Inspectors also visited the whole-school collective worship.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher and deputy headteacher and with other senior leaders. Inspectors also met with a number of teachers and support staff. The lead inspector met with the chair of governors and one other member of the governing body. The lead inspector met with the local authority's improvement adviser.
- Inspectors met with parents at the beginning of both days of the inspection and took account of the 43 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View.
- Inspectors reviewed many of the school's documents and policies, including those related to safeguarding, attendance and behaviour. The school's self-evaluation, improvement planning and assessment information were considered. Other documents were reviewed, including evaluations of teaching and learning, minutes of meetings and notes of visits from the local authority's improvement adviser.

Inspection team

Sue Cox, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Sean McKeown

Ofsted Inspector

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