

Keston Church of England Primary School

Lakes Road, Keston, Kent BR2 6BN

Inspection dates

26–27 September 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	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Outstanding

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Leaders and members of the trust clearly identify priorities for improvement, and they work together seamlessly to meet these. For example, outcomes at key stage 2 rose by a large degree last year.
- Leaders have excellent systems for developing teachers' professional expertise, both in school and across the trust.
- Children get off to a good start in early years. Teaching meets their needs. Improvements to early years provision mean that more children are now well prepared for joining Year 1.
- The curriculum is a strength of the school. Pupils have many opportunities to excel in sports, the arts and music as well as in more academic subjects.
- Leaders foster pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development exceptionally well. Roles and responsibilities within school and trust-wide events prepare pupils well for life in secondary school and beyond.
- Provision for pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities and for the most able pupils is highly effective. These groups make strong progress.
- Leaders have a deep understanding of the school's context. This enables them to meet pupils' pastoral needs exceptionally well, especially in terms of ensuring that the most vulnerable pupils get the support that they need.
- Pupils are extremely thoughtful and considerate. They have very positive views about those with different lifestyles and beliefs and actively promote diversity, tolerance and respect. They are proud to represent the school at external events, such as musical performances and sporting competitions.
- Teaching is effective and leads to good progress. However, on occasion, teachers miss opportunities to intervene during lessons to move pupils' learning on even further.
- Pupils have great ideas and use sophisticated vocabulary to bring their writing to life. However, handwriting is often poor, and this can sometimes affect pupils' spelling and limit the quantity of work produced.
- Occasionally, pupils can be overly dependent on adult support. When this happens, progress slows as pupils wait for advice rather than attempting to complete their work themselves.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that outcomes continue to rise by:
 - intervening in lessons more effectively to move learning on
 - improving handwriting across the school
 - developing pupils' confidence as learners further by ensuring that they have self-help strategies and become less reliant on adults.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Leaders and members of the trust have ensured that the school provides a vibrant and comprehensive curriculum which contributes significantly to pupils leaving as well-rounded individuals who are ready both for secondary school and, beyond that, for life in modern Britain.
- The importance the school places on tolerance and respect is palpable. Pupils are very clear about valuing lifestyles different to their own. They have a good understanding of the diverse nature of British society.
- Positive relationships underpin much of the school's success. Adults and pupils alike talk of what a happy school it is.
- Leaders have a good grasp of what needs to be improved. This has led to recent improvements in, for example, progress across key stage 2 and outcomes in the early years. The school's self-evaluation is accurate and leads to clear actions for development. This is enhanced by leaders' good understanding of the school's context and the needs of its pupils.
- Professional development is a crucial element in the trust's success. There is a strong mentoring programme which this school plays a vital role in leading. Capacity is maximised because the trust encourages its staff to play to their strengths. For example, the headteacher is passionate about sports and outdoor learning, which are both strengths in this school. Consequently, she leads on this across the trust.
- Leaders both benefit from and contribute to the spreading of best practice across the trust. Staff at the early stage of their careers feel very well supported. There are also plenty of opportunities for teachers to take on areas of responsibility and move into leadership roles.
- The curriculum is a real strength. There is diversity and opportunity within it. From chess to ukulele, cookery to coding, pupils are exposed to so many different experiences that they can find something that they excel at that they might not otherwise have discovered. This has a real impact on their emotional well-being.
- The curriculum provides extra opportunities for the most able pupils. The trust runs a number of events, such as Darwin day and an advanced mathematics quiz. This contributes to the strong progress that most-able pupils make.
- There are lots of opportunities for pupils to develop spiritually, morally, socially and culturally. In terms of understanding fundamental British values, pupils are exposed to democracy in action in many ways. As well as voting for house captains and other important positions in school, they run parallel elections when there are any national or local votes being held. Year 6 pupils organise weekly worship for the whole school. The outgoing Year 6 then interview Year 5 pupils so that they are able to take over the role the following year. Pupils also run a banking service where money can be deposited and saved. They are very clear that they cannot divulge any confidential information about who has saved and how much. Junior travel ambassadors have worked with local residents to create leaflets to improve parking around the school.

Governance of the school

- The trust provides strong support and challenge.
- Trust members have a very clear view of the school's strengths, which they use highly effectively to develop other schools across the trust.
- Equally, they know where the school needs to improve further. Trust members hold leaders to account for all aspects of the school's work. This close focus was instrumental in raising standards in 2018.
- The trust ensures that there are strong, trust-wide systems and policies for ensuring that its schools run smoothly and all statutory obligations are met.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders and governors ensure that records are well organised. Checks on the suitability of staff to work with children are thorough and clearly recorded. Training is kept up to date.
- The school's particular strength is in the work it does to ensure that pupils feel safe. All the pupils to whom inspectors spoke said that they felt exceptionally safe at school. They could cite many ways in which staff help them to know how to stay safe.
- Staff are clear about safeguarding procedures. They ensure that any concerns are reported swiftly and accurately. Where concerns lead to referrals to outside agencies, leaders follow these up tenaciously if necessary. In this way, pupils, especially the most vulnerable, get the support that they need in a timely manner.
- The school's procedures for meeting the needs of pupils with specific medical issues are rigorous. Staff know who these pupils are, and they know how to deal with any emergencies. Arrangements for keeping medication in school are thorough and include regular checks on expiry dates.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teachers use their strong subject knowledge to design tasks and activities that meet pupils' needs across a range of subjects.
- Teaching is particularly effective for the most able pupils. There is strong challenge in lessons to move most-able pupils' learning on. This results in these pupils developing excellent skills and confidence, which will stand them in very good stead as they move on to secondary school. For example, the most able pupils who read with inspectors had a sophisticated understanding of the books that they were reading. They also talked very confidently about what they choose to read and why. They understand that it is important to read different types of books so that you develop good general knowledge and a broad vocabulary which can help you in your own writing.
- Leaders ensure that teaching meets the needs of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities very well, through a carefully designed combination of work in class and additional interventions.

- One of the changes leaders made recently was to introduce high-quality texts on which to base reading and writing activities. Texts are often linked to the current topic, which creates strong opportunities to write across a range of subjects. This has proven to be both popular and highly effective. The texts engage pupils, and teachers capitalise on this to develop pupils' reading and writing skills. This has led to pupils producing substantial pieces of original written work, such as poems about volcanoes and information about the life of Neil Armstrong.
- Teachers' expectations for conduct are clear. The use of behaviour charts and points on the electronic behaviour reward system encourage pupils to behave well in lessons. Consequently, low level disruption, if it happens at all, is extremely rare.
- On occasion, pupils are over dependent on adult help to complete tasks. When this happens, learning slows while they are waiting for this help.
- Inspectors saw examples of poor handwriting across the school. This hinders pupils' fluency when writing, which in turn slows progress.
- Teachers do not always intervene swiftly enough to counter misconceptions in learning. For example, some pupils had misunderstood the instructions for a task and were simply copying rather than coming up with their own adaptations of the original idea. Adults did not notice this, so these pupils wasted time on an activity that did not stretch their thinking.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- When pupils join the school, many of them have very little independence and rely on adults to do a lot for them. Leaders have taken a long-term view in tackling this. Initiatives such as the national programme for outdoor learning, which capitalises on the school's woodland setting, are successful in addressing this lack of independence.
- Pupils are extremely confident when learning in the woods and this is being used to develop their general resilience. The greatest impact so far can be seen in how confidently pupils take part in musical performances and in how they represent the school in sporting events. Leaders know that they have more to do to ensure that all pupils are confident and independent learners in the classroom.
- Pupils are proud of their school and proud of their achievements at school, such as singing at the 02 Arena and doing well in tournaments against other schools in a range of sports. They say that their 'School is amazing. It really helps you to have a good future.'
- Pupils have the opportunity to take part in debates, both in class but also in the trust-wide debating competition. They listen carefully to each other's views. Inspectors saw several examples of where pupils watched each other's drama performances and gave appropriate feedback.
- Pupils have a highly developed understanding of e-safety. They are confident as to what to do should they encounter any sites that cause them concern. They are

absolutely adamant that under no circumstances should you give out any personal information because they know there are people out there who are prepared to exploit children online. As one pupil put it: 'Everyone knows about stranger danger.'

- Pupils understand what constitutes bullying. They say it has no place in their school. Any occurrences are rare and are dealt with quickly and effectively. They say that the school takes bullying very seriously.
- Pupils feel really safe at school. They appreciate the procedures for ensuring that visitors are carefully checked before gaining access. Pupils said that they knew they could talk to the inspectors safely because they had badges. Pupils can cite how the school helps them to learn how to stay safe, for example through fire drills, the lockdown drill and the strong emphasis on online safety. They also learn how to stay safe outside school, for example on the roads and when using public transport.
- Provision for pupils' emotional well-being is well thought out. Pupils have the opportunity to refer themselves to the on-site counselling service. They are very clear that you can talk about anything that worries you, from minor concerns to more serious matters. Leaders also use this facility for pupils who need specific help to overcome emotional or mental health issues.
- Fitness is a key aspect of school life. There are lots of opportunities to go running as well as to participate in the wide range of sports on offer. Leaders are passionate about sport. One of the rationales for offering so many different choices is that pupils can then find the one that really motivates them and that they can therefore excel at.
- As part of the focus on developing healthy lifestyles, the school runs an annual health week, which covers a range of important issues. This helps pupils to develop a good understanding of what they need to do to optimise their health. This understanding can be seen in the healthy choices that they make at lunchtimes.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Pupils are respectful and kind. They show strong self-discipline in their conduct around the school and the playground. They are trusted to move around by themselves and do this really sensibly.
- Pupils look out for one another. Playtimes are therefore really harmonious. Parents are very positive about the buddy system, where older pupils pair up with younger children to help them settle.
- Instances of minor poor behaviour are extremely rare, and there is barely ever anything more serious.
- Leaders work highly effectively to support pupils with particular behavioural needs so that incidents of poor behaviour decrease sharply. They make good use of experts such as the in-house counsellor as well as external agencies when necessary. Consequently, there have been no exclusions in at least a decade.
- Attendance is broadly in line with the national average. Leaders have worked effectively to reduce the number of pupils who are persistently absent.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Pupils make good progress. For example, progress across key stage 2 improved significantly in mathematics in 2018. The school's own assessment information suggests that this is being maintained.
- Work in books shows that most pupils are confidently using strategies that they have previously been taught. This helps to move their learning on. However, on occasion, teachers do not intervene as quickly as they ought to, in order to ensure that those that are struggling are helped to catch up.
- Outcomes have improved for the most able pupils. This is because their needs are very well met in lessons.
- Provision for pupils with SEN and/or disabilities is highly effective. Specialist provision has a positive impact on pupils' outcomes, for example in speaking and using expressive language. The school uses specialists, both from external agencies and school and trust-trained staff, well to provide tailor-made solutions to ensure that pupils' needs are met.
- There are small numbers of disadvantaged pupils in most classes, which makes it difficult to make generalisations about provision for this group. Looked at on an individual basis, there are a lot of successes. Ensuring strong outcomes across the broader curriculum is a particular strength. Leaders ensure that disadvantaged pupils experience a wide range of opportunities to expand their horizons and excel in a range of musical, artistic and sporting disciplines. For example, disadvantaged pupils who learn to play a musical instrument perform confidently.
- Pupils are very keen readers. They are enthusiastic about the texts that they read, including those linked to their topic. Older pupils speak about their choice of books very confidently. The most able pupils, in particular, have a sophisticated understanding of how to work out the meaning of new words so that they can use them successfully in their own writing.
- Pupils feel that the school prepares them very well for the next stage in their education. They leave Keston as well-rounded individuals with a wealth of experiences to carry them forward and ensure that they find their place in modern Britain.

Early years provision

Good

- Early years is well led. The proportion of children who reached a good level of development rose in 2018, due to well-thought-out changes in provision that resulted in children's needs being better met. This meant that more children were ready for Year 1.
- The curriculum is well designed. The use of themes really grabs children's interest. During the inspection, the theme was 'dinosaurs'. Adults encouraged children to expand their knowledge about dinosaurs by using reference books. Children were so taken by this topic that many could name even some of the more obscure and difficult to pronounce varieties.

- Staff have a detailed understanding of children's interests and backgrounds. They gather this information through home visits and other induction activities. They can then tailor provision accordingly. For example, very few children can recognise their own names when they start school. To help them with this, they have to find their own names every morning and stick them on a special board so that teachers know they are present.
- Once in school, staff make careful observations so that they can provide what children need to make good progress, especially in key areas. There are, for example, a lot of opportunities for kneading dough, putting small pegs into pegboards and other activities that require good manual dexterity. This is because adults have identified that children have underdeveloped wrist and hand muscles.
- Schools across the trust work well together to reflect on and improve practice. This really supports small schools such as this, where there is only one class in early years, as it enables staff to take part in professional dialogue with others in the same field.
- Leaders are keen to increase parental participation as they understand that support from home is really beneficial to children's early development. To this end, they run regular workshops, on, for example, phonics, which are increasingly well attended.
- Children play well together. They are very polite. Inspectors heard 'please' and 'thank you' regularly during their visits to early years. A particular example of this was the ice cream stall set up in the outdoor area. Children queued really patiently for their turn, and they answered respectfully when they were asked which flavour they would like.
- A number of children were reluctant to try and be independent, for example they were immediately seeking an adult to put their jumpers or coats on for them rather than attempting it themselves.

School details

Unique reference number	140729
Local authority	Bromley
Inspection number	10052643

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	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	5 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	209
Appropriate authority	Aquinas Church of England Education Trust
Chair	Simon Parker
Headteacher	Julia Evison
Executive headteacher	Geraldine Shackleton
Telephone number	01689 858 399
Website	www.keston.bromley.sch.uk
Email address	julia.evison@keston.bromley.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	3 June 2009

Information about this school

- This is a smaller than average-sized primary school.
- The school is a voluntary-controlled Church of England primary academy in the Diocese of Rochester. Its most recent diocesan inspection took place in July 2014.
- The school is a member of the Aquinas Church of England Education Trust, which it joined in 2014.
- The proportions of pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds and of pupils who speak English as an additional language are lower than average.
- There are far fewer than average disadvantaged pupils in the school. The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is lower than average.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited each class at least once to observe teaching and learning across a range of subjects. Most of these visits were conducted jointly with school leaders.
- The inspection team looked at the work that pupils have completed in their books, read with pupils from several year groups, and took into account the school's information on pupils' attainment and progress.
- Inspectors held discussions with staff, including senior leaders, and members of the academy trust. They scrutinised documents, including those relating to safeguarding, attendance, the school's improvement planning and the monitoring of teaching and learning.
- Inspectors observed pupils at playtime and lunchtime and in a whole school assembly. They also sought pupils' views both formally in meetings and more informally at work and at play.
- There were too few responses on Ofsted's online survey, Parent View. Inspectors spoke to parents to seek their views during the inspection.

Inspection team

Jeanie Jovanova, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Martina Martin

Ofsted Inspector

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