

# Lordswood School

Lordswood Lane, Chatham, Kent ME5 8NN

## Inspection dates

15–16 January 2019

<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>Good</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- School leaders share an ambitious drive for improvement. They have an unwavering desire that all pupils will achieve well.
- Subject leaders are effective and produce helpful plans for improving outcomes. They have astutely targeted the need to develop in staff a deeper understanding of what progress looks like, in their subjects. They have introduced assessments to help them track the progress that pupils make.
- Teaching has strengthened since the previous inspection. Leaders have ensured that the training and development of staff has resulted in good teaching. However, teachers' questioning does not always challenge pupils to embed their learning and deepen their understanding.
- Pupils experience a broad and balanced curriculum that inspires them to learn. They enjoy the topics taught and retain the knowledge that they acquire.
- Pupil premium funding is spent well. School leaders ensure it supports outcomes for disadvantaged pupils across the school. However, the proportions of disadvantaged pupils achieving greater depth in writing at the end of key stage 1 and key stage 2 is too low.
- Pupils behave well. They have positive attitudes to learning and enjoy one another's company and friendship.
- Parents and carers speak very highly of the school and recognise the many improvements made since the previous inspection.
- The support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is effective. Pupils make good progress from their starting points because of the strong provision they receive.
- Governors are knowledgeable about the school and know what to do to drive improvement. The newly formed governing body's 'improvement board' is well positioned to support leaders to strengthen outcomes further for all pupils.
- In the early years foundation stage, children settle well to life in the Nursery and Reception Year and make good progress from their starting points.
- Provision for developing pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding. Pupils receive a broad range of opportunities, across the curriculum, to think about their own and others' beliefs and values, preparing them well for life in modern Britain.

## **Full report**

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

- Strengthen teachers' questioning, so that it consistently probes pupils' knowledge and deepens their understanding, particularly for the most able.
- Continue to improve disadvantaged pupils' outcomes, by increasing the proportion achieving greater depth in writing at the end of both key stage 1 and key stage 2.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

**Good**

- The head of school and executive headteacher set high expectations for staff. They have an accurate understanding of the quality of teaching and use this to support staff to improve. As a result, the quality of teaching and outcomes for pupils have strengthened since the previous inspection.
- School leaders have developed an engaging curriculum. Subject leaders have supported the leader of the wider curriculum to introduce a curriculum that develops pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding in a wide range of subjects. The curriculum is broad, balanced and inspires pupils to learn.
- Subject leaders have a clear understanding of standards in their subject and what is needed to strengthen the quality of teaching. Subject leaders produce well-thought-through plans to bring about improvements across all subjects taught. However, the recently introduced tracking system is yet to be used consistently by subject leaders to inform their plans for further improvement.
- School leaders provide good opportunities for staff training and support. Subject leaders have observed senior leaders undertaking monitoring visits to classrooms, and teachers are encouraged to observe strong practice within the school and multi-academy trust (MAT). Subject leaders are building their capacity to monitor the quality of education within their subject. They have modelled high-quality lessons and developed the confidence of teachers to deliver effective learning in a wide range of subjects.
- Pupils with SEND are supported well. The special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) has a good understanding of the different needs of pupils and helps staff to ensure that provision is strong. Staff feel supported effectively by the SENCo. Provision for pupils with SEND delivers appropriate and timely support and they progress well.
- Provision for disadvantaged pupils is effective. School leaders produce a robust action plan to ensure appropriate support for disadvantaged pupils. The plan addresses pupils' key barriers to learning. As a result, disadvantaged pupils often make good progress across a wide range of subjects.
- The primary physical education and sport premium is used effectively. School leaders clearly articulate the impact of the provision for sport on pupils and help staff to develop their own practice. They are rightly proud of being awarded '2018 primary school of the year for sport gold award' by the local authority. Because of the school's use of funding, pupils have increased access to a wide range of sports within the school and through collaboration with local schools, including schools within the MAT.
- School leaders create a culture in which pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development thrives. The school's values of honesty, perseverance and respect are upheld by adults and pupils alike. School leaders and governors echo the commitment to be 'Griffin Great' and nurture an aspirational spirit in both pupils and staff. This creates a context in which pupils are encouraged to reflect on their own beliefs and those of others, show compassion towards others and develop their understanding of fundamental British values.

- Parents have confidence in the school's leadership. They recognise the sterling work that has been undertaken by leaders at every level to bring about improvements, since the last inspection. They speak very highly of the head of school and consider her as pivotal to the improvement that has been made. They feel well supported by staff and are proud to be part of the school's community.

### **Governance of the school**

- Governors are knowledgeable about the school, knowing what is needed to drive improvement. Following on from the external review of governance, the recently appointed 'improvement board' now holds senior leaders to account through regular monitoring visits. Senior leaders are challenged to evaluate their plans for improvement regularly to ensure that these have a positive impact.

### **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Strong systems are in place to ensure that any concern about the welfare of a pupil is raised and acted on quickly. Accurate safeguarding records are kept. School leaders make sure that all the required recruitment checks are carried out on adults before they can work in the school.
- Pupils feel safe. The designated safeguarding lead ensures that all staff receive timely and relevant training. Staff are clear about their roles and responsibilities for keeping pupils safe. Pupils are confident that they can talk to a trusted adult in school if they have a concern about their own well-being.

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

**Good**

- Pupils are given rich opportunities to write for different purposes across a range of subjects. They write about their investigations in science, explain their thinking in mathematics, write letters in history and produce engaging descriptive writing in geography. This enables them to practise their writing skills purposefully across the curriculum and achieve well.
- Pupils show interest when learning about their own religions and the religions of others. During religious education lessons in key stage 2, pupils learned about Muslim prayer and pupils in key stage 1 learned about kindness in the Jewish faith. Through these experiences, pupils gain a meaningful understanding of the different faiths in modern Britain.
- Teachers structure phonics activities well and demonstrate their strong subject knowledge. Both teachers and teaching assistants use their knowledge to deliver engaging tasks, so that pupils develop a clear understanding of letters and the sounds they represent. This supports pupils' competent mastery of early reading and writing skills.
- Teachers plan opportunities for pupils to strengthen their skills in a wide range of subjects. Pupils are encouraged to research in history lessons, discuss their ideas in philosophy lessons, produce digital presentations in geography and share their writing through the school's 'wow work' displays. As a result, pupils are proud to share work

they produce.

- In music lessons, teachers develop, consolidate and deepen pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills. Pupils learn to play the ukulele and drums as a class. They speak very positively about singing in assemblies and, generally, develop a sense of rhythm and pulse as well as a joyful appreciation of music.
- Support for pupils with SEND and for pupils who speak English as an additional language is effective. Teaching assistants form positive relationships with pupils and build their confidence as learners. Work is adapted well to make sure pupils understand what is required, helping them to make good progress from their starting points.
- Parents have confidence in the teaching staff and comment very positively about how well they cater for the needs of their children, particularly those with SEND. This is illustrated by one parent's comment: 'The SEN team have been a fantastic support.' This reflects how staff listen to parents' views and respond sensitively to their children's needs. As a result, parents of pupils with SEND have high levels of trust in the school.
- Teachers use the school's assessment system to track pupils' attainment across a wide range of subjects. The assessment of reading, writing and mathematics is well established, with assessment for the wider curriculum having been recently introduced. These assessments are enabling teachers to plan more consistently in foundation subjects to ensure that work matches the needs of pupils. However, pupil performance information is not always used well to ensure that all activities challenge the most able pupils.
- Teachers are not consistent in their use of questioning to probe and challenge pupils' thinking about the concepts being discussed. Sometimes, the questions asked do not require the most able pupils to think deeply and so develop a better understanding. As a result, some pupils can become less engaged and become reluctant to offer an answer when asked.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Good**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Pupils, parents and staff are proud to be members of the school's community. Pupils readily welcome adults to their classroom and are keen to share their work. Teachers provide rich opportunities for pupils to reflect on the school's 'value of the month'. Pupils, parents and teachers champion the school and are happy to recommend it to others.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is nurtured by the school. Pupils are introduced to a range of experiences that encourage them to think about the importance of equality and faith. They are tolerant of the views held by others and well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- The school provides a wide and engaging range of clubs and activities. Breakfast club offers a positive and calm start to the day, and a wide range of after-school clubs and activities are provided. These include foot-golf, archery, table tennis and the 'Griffin Sports Festival'. The breadth of activities ensures that all pupils, including

disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND, have a wide range of opportunities.

- Pupils' mental well-being is catered for well. The school has introduced activities to support pupils' well-being, including mindfulness training for teachers and pupils. The school has received a mental health award in recognition of its commitment to pupils' mental health and well-being.
- Pupils can explain accurately and confidently how to keep themselves healthy and safe. They are encouraged to select healthy food choices for lunch. They show awareness of how to keep themselves safe online. This was evident in a computing lesson where pupils were encouraged to think about the importance of setting a strong password for online accounts. Pupils engage in a wide range of activities to keep healthy and safe and say that they feel safe in school.

## Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils enjoy one another's company and have positive relationships. They play well during social times and interact positively during lessons with pupils and adults. This creates a happy and safe environment for pupils where incidents of misbehaviour and bullying are rare.
- Pupils are keen to attend. Leaders highlight the attendance of classes in the school's newsletters and provide rewards for attendance, including tickets for the 'attendance lottery' which are awarded for positive attendance. These actions support pupils' strong attendance across the school.
- Pupils' behaviour is good. They have positive relationships with one another and are polite to adults. Incidents of misbehaviour are rare. However, occasionally some low-level disruption in some lessons leads to a small number of pupils not making strong progress because they are not yet able to regulate their own behaviour effectively.

## Outcomes for pupils

**Good**

- Pupils across the school are making good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Overall, pupils acquire skills, knowledge and understanding well and apply these to their work across the curriculum. By end of key stage 1, the proportion of pupils who reach the expected standard in English and mathematics is in line with the national average. At the end of key stage 2, the proportion of pupils who reach the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics combined is above the national average.
- Pupils read well. They enter Year 1 with secure phonics knowledge and skills. Because of the effective teaching of phonics, pupils' attainment in the Year 1 phonics screening check is higher than the national average. Pupils in Year 2 use their phonic skills to help them read unfamiliar words confidently. Reading skills are effectively developed across key stage 2. The support of reading volunteers helps to instil in pupils a love of reading.
- Most pupils who are disadvantaged are making good progress. In some year groups, the progress of disadvantaged pupils is stronger than that of other pupils. Disadvantaged pupils benefit from a wide range of actions funded through the pupil

premium. These include the provision of clubs, involvement in specific events organised by the MAT and additional reading support.

- Pupils with SEND and those who speak English as an additional language are supported well. The SENCo knows pupils well and has a clear understanding of their individual needs. There is a robust approach to ensuring that class teachers are fully involved, informed and included in devising the provision for pupils. As a result, pupils with SEND and those who speak English as an additional language make good progress from their starting points.
- Outcomes for the most able pupils are strong in reading and mathematics, including outcomes for the most-able disadvantaged. By end of key stage 2, the difference between the attainment of disadvantaged pupils and other pupils nationally is diminishing. However, too few disadvantaged pupils achieve greater depth in writing.
- Pupils generally achieve well across a wide range of subjects. In science, pupils engage in a variety of practical tasks that broaden their scientific understanding. One pupil said: 'I love science because my teacher makes it really interesting.' As a result, the work recorded in pupils' books shows the effective acquisition of knowledge and understanding across a wide range of subjects.
- Pupils make strong progress in mathematics and enjoy their learning. Work in books shows most pupils make strong progress across key stage 2. By the end of key stage 2, pupils' progress in mathematics, including the progress made by disadvantaged pupils, is above the national average.

### Early years provision

**Good**

- The early years leader has a clear picture of the strengths and weaknesses of the early years provision. Termly reviews are held with staff to ensure that all children are making strong progress. This leads to swift and precise support for children who are not on track to achieve well.
- The school's own assessments show that children enter Reception with skills and abilities broadly typical for their age. Children develop early reading, writing and number skills through a range of activities. As a result, the work in children's learning journals shows good progress for all areas of learning.
- Children with SEND are supported well. For example, children are helped to develop their letter formation with support for their pencil grip. This results in children with SEND making good progress from their starting points.
- Teachers ensure that children develop strong dispositions for learning. Children play confidently together and have positive relationships with each other and adults. They settle well in the morning because of well-established routines. Children quickly adapt to life in early years and smooth transition supports them as they move from Nursery to Reception. This prepares them well for the transition to key stage 1.
- The early years leader works hard to engage all parents in their children's learning. Parents are well informed about their child's learning in early years through social media links. They are also invited to a range of events and information sessions throughout the year. Although uptake has not always been strong, parents value the education their children receive.

- Children acquire a good foundation in phonics in the early years. They are given opportunities to develop their phonic knowledge and skills through a range of teacher-directed activities across Nursery and the Reception Year. Phonics outcomes have improved since the introduction of a new scheme for phonics.
- Adults do not always take every opportunity to question children during child-initiated activities, to build on the key skills and understanding introduced during teacher-directed learning. As a result, progress for some children is not as strong as it could be.
- Safeguarding is effective in the early years. Activities are carefully risk assessed to ensure that they are safe. Effective systems are in place to ensure children's welfare and all concerns are immediately shared with the designated safeguarding lead.



## School details

Unique reference number	140186
Local authority	Medway
Inspection number	10058144

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	392
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Gemma Sant
Headteacher	Jayne Lusinski
Telephone number	03000658250
Website	<a href="http://www.lordswood-gst.org">www.lordswood-gst.org</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:office@lordswoodschool.medway.sch.uk">office@lordswoodschool.medway.sch.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	5–6 October 2016

## Information about this school

- Lordswood School is larger than the average-sized primary school and has nursery provision.
- The school joined The Griffin Schools Trust in November 2013. The Griffin Schools Trust is a MAT and has 13 schools in the South East and Midlands regions.
- The head of school has been in post since the previous inspection. The head of school is supported by an executive headteacher who oversees three schools within the MAT. The trust board has appointed an 'improvement board' consisting of local governors, who include both MAT central team staff, headteachers within the MAT and volunteers.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is lower than the national average. The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is broadly in line with the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is lower than the national average.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 27 lessons, including 23 observed jointly with senior leaders.
- Inspector talked to pupils in lessons, at breaktimes and with a group of pupils in a formal meeting.
- Inspectors held meetings with senior leaders, middle leaders, a range of other staff, governors and the MAT's chief executive officer.
- Inspectors carried out a scrutiny of pupils' work with school leaders.
- Inspectors looked at a wide range of documents, including: the school's own assessment information; the school's self-evaluation and plan for improvement; policies; minutes of the governing body's meetings and monitoring; teaching and learning monitoring records; and records relating to pupils' attendance, behaviour and safeguarding. The lead inspector also scrutinised the school's website.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read.
- The views of 67 parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire Parent View, including 33 free-text comments, were considered. The views of 28 staff were taken account of through Ofsted's staff survey.

## Inspection team

Graham Chisnell, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Clementina Aina	Ofsted Inspector
Alan Jenner	Ofsted Inspector

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