

Inspection of Singlewell Primary School

Mackenzie Way, Gravesend, Kent DA12 5TY

Inspection dates: 24 and 25 January 2023

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Early years provision **Good**

Previous inspection grade Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy at this vibrant and attractive school. Everyone is welcomed, included and looked after. There is a strong 'family feel' across the whole school community. Leaders have recently introduced the 'CARES' values, which encourage pupils to be curious, ambitious, resilient, equal and safe.

Teachers' expectations of pupils' work and behaviour are high. Pupils listen carefully to their teachers in lessons and want to do well. The work they do in their books is of a good quality. They learn to sew, and enjoy their art lessons and spending time in the cosy and well-stocked library.

Pupils behave well. Relationships across the school are warm and friendly. Everyone gets along. Should there be any unkind behaviour, adults sort this out quickly. Consequently, pupils trust staff to help them with any worries they may have.

Leaders and staff are ambitious for pupils. They have made many positive changes to all areas of the school's curriculum. Pupils attend lunchtime clubs where, for example, they learn to hurdle. Nonetheless, leaders are in the process of strengthening the school's curriculum. This is so that there are a wider range of opportunities for pupils to develop their interests and broaden their experiences.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

All pupils study a wide range of subjects. Leaders have carefully considered the knowledge and skills they want pupils to learn from early years to the end of key stage 2. This work is continuing and is better developed in some subjects than in others. However, leaders know what they need to do in order to ensure that subjects such as music, modern foreign languages and personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) are as well planned, delivered and evaluated as the better developed subjects.

Leaders ensure that reading is at the heart of the curriculum. Children in early years get off to an impressive start with their reading. They, along with pupils in key stage 1, receive regular phonics sessions. Leaders have developed staff's expertise through training and coaching. This means that staff are confident in their practice. The books that pupils read closely match the sounds they are learning. Leaders offer parents phonics workshops and videos to support reading at home. Pupils' progress is tracked carefully so that any pupil who starts to fall behind can be identified quickly and helped to catch up.

Plenty of story sharing and regular visits to the library help pupils develop a love of books. Leaders have mapped out the texts teachers use in class to ensure that pupils hear a range of authors and themes.

In Reception, children start to explore number through play and more formal sessions. For example, children count on and subtract numbers using 'grandma's

apples', a technique linked to the story of Little Red Riding Hood. As pupils move up the school, they build their number skills and mathematical knowledge systematically. This helps them tackle increasingly complex calculations.

Leaders show tenacity in their work to support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Leaders are determined that these pupils are fully included in all aspects of school life. Strong leadership means that pupils' needs are well understood by all and appropriate adaptations can be made to learning. Leaders work well with external agencies to ensure that pupils get the help they need. The recently established 'Harbour' provision offers bespoke support for pupils with more complex needs.

In lessons and around school pupils behave well. Classrooms are calm, well-ordered places. Resources are impeccably organised and maintained. Pupils are understandably proud to see their best work on displays.

Pupils' personal development is supported through assemblies and the school's 'taught' curriculum. Pupils learn about different cultures and religions. They take part in fundraising events. Adults help the youngest children to interact positively with each other and to develop their understanding of the world around them. Older pupils are given responsibilities, such as library monitors. However, leaders recognise that they need to strengthen the experiences and opportunities available for all pupils.

Over the last seven years, senior leaders and governors have capably steered the school through the challenges of an increasing pupil roll, extensive building work, staff changes and the COVID-19 pandemic. Governors undertake their duties with diligence and dedication. They effectively hold leaders to account and provide thoughtful support and challenge.

Staff work well together and are appreciative of the support they receive from leaders. They say that they 'feel heard' and that leaders take account of their workload, considering this when bringing in new initiatives or at busy times of the school year.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff have regular training so that they are able to identify any safeguarding needs. They know how to record any concerns they may have. These are followed up swiftly by leaders. The designated safeguarding leads work effectively together to ensure that pupils and families receive the support they need.

Leaders complete the appropriate checks on adults who work at or visit the school.

Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe. They are taught how to keep safe online and when crossing roads. Pupils know what to do if they have a worry or concern.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some subjects, such as PSHE, music and modern foreign languages, are not carefully planned and sequenced from early years to the end of key stage 2. In these subjects, pupils do not learn or achieve as well as they could. Leaders should consider the important knowledge they want pupils to learn in these subjects and check that pupils are learning it effectively.
- Leaders' strategy for pupils' personal development is not as well embedded as it could be. This work has, in part, been hampered by COVID-19 and changes to staffing. The school's PSHE curriculum and wider opportunities do not always lead to meaningful learning for pupils. Leaders are in the process of expanding and strengthening the school's offer. This will further develop and enhance pupils' personal development.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	118479
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10256402
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	5 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	396
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Daniel King
Headteacher	Michelle Brown
Website	www.singlewell.kent.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	22 November 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Over the last seven years, the number of pupils on the school's roll has doubled.
- The school has increased from a one form to a two-form entry primary school.
- This is the first year there have been two classes in every year group.
- The school currently does not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, two assistant headteachers and the special educational needs coordinator.
- The lead inspector met with a representative from the local authority as well as members of the governing body, including the chair of governors.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, history and art. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with

subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors also looked at pupils' work in science, geography and modern foreign languages.

- As part of the inspection of safeguarding, inspectors reviewed the school's safeguarding arrangements. Inspectors scrutinised the school's single central record and the systems in place for recruitment.
- In order to gather the views of the parents, inspectors considered responses to the Ofsted Parent View survey and free-text comments. An inspector spoke to some parents at the start of the first day of the inspection.
- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted's confidential staff survey and met with a range of staff during the inspection.
- Inspectors held meetings with pupils in key stage 2 and spoke to pupils throughout the inspection to gather their views of the school.

Inspection team

Frances Nation, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Kirstine Boon	Ofsted Inspector
Chris Parker	His Majesty's Inspector

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