

Inspection of a good school: Lydd Primary School

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

Inspection dates: 12 and 13 September 2023

Outcome

Lydd Primary School continues to be a good school.

The headteacher of this school is Nicki Man. This school is part of Our Community Multi Academy Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, David Whitehead, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Mike O'Connell.

What is it like to attend this school?

At the heart of Lydd Primary School is a strong sense of serving the community. Pupils animatedly discuss what they have learned from trips to the local church and Lydd Town Museum. They are equally enthusiastic about the historical figures that they have been taught about in the curriculum and the inspirational speakers who have visited their school.

Pupils meet leaders' high expectations of them. Right from the early years, children are inquisitive and demonstrate a thirst for learning. They are polite and friendly and enjoy coming to school. Relationships between pupils and adults are respectful and nurturing. As a result, pupils feel safe and cared for by staff. As one parent commented, 'All pupils are equal, treated fairly and encouraged to be the best that they can be.'

Pupils are proud of the school that they attend. They enjoy a wide range of leadership opportunities, including being part of the school council, behaviour ambassadors and play leaders. Pupils appreciate these responsibilities and value the opportunity to give back to the school. They also enjoy the variety of clubs on offer, some of which make effective use of community facilities, such as sailing and tennis.

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

The curriculum is broad and ambitious for all pupils. Pupils benefit from being taught a range of carefully selected content that is taught in an appropriate order. Leaders are ambitious for all pupils and want them to learn about 'Lydd and beyond'. Pupils are taught important knowledge about their community, as well as key content needed to help prepare them for their next stages in education.

Staff have strong subject knowledge and they are confident to teach the planned curriculum. In each subject, staff have carefully identified important vocabulary for pupils to learn. Many pupils use this vocabulary seamlessly when they discuss their learning. Where the curriculum is taught most effectively, staff give clear explanations and engage all pupils in insightful discussions. Pupils thrive in these classes. Some pupils are taught in mixed-age classes and staff are adept at supporting these pupils to gradually develop knowledge and skills across each subject. As a result, many pupils can confidently discuss what they have learned and why it is important. However, a small number of pupils, including some pupils with SEND, do not learn the curriculum as securely as they could.

Reading is given high priority in the school. Pupils are taught to read from the day they arrive and there is a consistent approach to teaching reading. Typically, staff provide all pupils with the practice time needed to improve. They adjust their teaching based on what pupils demonstrate that they know and can do. A small number of pupils require additional support to read confidently and fluently. Adult support is planned systematically, but the strategies being used to support the weakest readers are not yet as effective as they could be. Staff need more training to ensure that the support is specific and appropriate.

Positive working relationships and the sharing of information between nursery and reception ensure that children settle well and build secure relationships with adults and enjoy their learning. Children in the early years are provided with rich experiences to help them to develop their language, movement and independence. Through high-quality interactions with adults and careful selection of activities to engage with, most children are given effective support to develop their knowledge.

Pupils are focused in lessons and respond well to instructions given by staff. They demonstrate respect for adults and value what they are being taught. As a result, learning is rarely disrupted. During social times, behaviour is also calm and respectful. Behaviour that does not meet leaders' high expectations is responded to quickly and appropriately.

Well-being and supporting pupils to communicate their feelings has been a key focus at the school. Pupils confidently discuss what they are taught in school about how to manage risks and keep safe. They learn age-appropriate content about healthy relationships through the personal, social and health education curriculum, as well as assemblies. As a result, pupils demonstrate a broad understanding of diversity and inclusivity, as well as how to be 'SMART' online.

There is a sharp focus on providing a high-quality education for all, regardless of pupils' starting points. The trust provides appropriate support to the school. Decision-making is tightly focused on what serves the best interests of the pupils. Staff feel well supported to manage their workload and they appreciate their views being considered in whole-school decisions. They are proud to work at the school and value its community ethos.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The support that the weakest readers receive is not yet precise enough. This means that not all pupils receive the help that they need to catch up quickly. The trust should ensure that all staff are trained to use the most effective strategies to support all pupils to overcome barriers to reading fluently.
- The support that a small number of pupils, including some pupils with SEND, receive in lessons is not yet having the desired impact. This means that a few pupils are not learning the curriculum as securely as they could. The trust should ensure that staff are trained to support all pupils to achieve highly.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in March 2018.

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](#)' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years,

looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	141660
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10288047
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	254
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Mike O'Connell
CEO of the trust	David Whitehead
Headteacher	Nicki Man
Website	www.lyddprimary.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	21 and 22 March 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of Our Community Multi Academy Trust.
- The school has a nursery class in the morning and afternoon. The nursery class provides education for three- and four-year-old children.
- The school does not currently use any alternative providers.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector held meetings with the CEO of the trust, the chair of the trust and a range of leaders from within the trust and the school.

- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, the inspector held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The inspector also discussed the curriculum in some other subjects.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- The inspector also observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school and discussed wider development opportunities with leaders and pupils.
- The inspector considered 17 responses to Ofsted Parent View, including 14 free-text comments. The inspector also took account of 24 responses to the staff survey and 25 responses to the pupil survey. The inspector also spoke with staff and pupils to gather their views.

Inspection team

Hanna Miller, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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