

Inspection of Hoo St Werburgh Primary School and the Marlborough

Pottery Road, Hoo St Werburgh, Rochester, Kent ME3 9BS

Inspection dates: 5 to 6 March 2024

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Good

The executive headteacher of this school is Emma Poad. This school is part of Rivermead Inclusive Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Tina Lovey, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Justin Stuart.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are truly cared for and nurtured at Hoo St Werburgh and the Marlborough. The school's values drive every decision made by staff. Pupils have a strong understanding of those values of courage, confidence, respect and belonging. Pupils use opportunities offered by the school, such as becoming a character ambassador to raise money for local charities.

This school is ambitious for all pupils to do well and achieve their best. Adults set clear expectations for learning. Pupils live up to these. They work hard in lessons and generally achieve well, especially in English and mathematics.

Pupils behave well. They play happily alongside each other, sharing the lunchtime equipment and enjoying games. They benefit from the nurturing and caring environment created by staff. For example, the koala club helps pupils with their concerns and provides them with opportunities to discuss any of these before school starts. Pupils also use the worry boxes to let staff know about what is on their mind so staff can help them. Consequently, pupils feel safe and listened to.

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

In most subjects, the school has ordered knowledge sensibly and worked out the most important knowledge that pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), need to know. This is especially strong in English and mathematics, and the positive examination results in 2023 reflect this. However, in a few subjects the school has not identified precisely enough what pupils need to know and when. This means that in these subjects teachers are not always clear what they need to teach pupils. As a result, pupils achieve less well than in the strongest subjects.

The school has prioritised improving staff's subject knowledge through precisely targeted training. Within lessons, staff check and address pupils' mistakes or misunderstandings. In subjects such as English and mathematics staff regularly check what pupils can remember. This leads to pupils knowing and remembering more in these subjects. However, in a few subjects assessment is not always used well enough to check pupils' knowledge. Consequently, in these subjects there are some gaps in what pupils can remember.

The school ensures that learning is well matched to pupils' understanding and meets their needs well. This is particularly strong for pupils with SEND, especially in the specialist on-site provision, The Marlborough. Staff ensure that they make precise and individual adaptations for pupils with SEND. Consequently, these pupils thrive and achieve very well.

Pupils love reading. In Reception, children concentrate very well because teachers keep them interested and enthused, particularly in phonics. Pupils learn phonics quickly, and staff identify gaps in children's understanding by checking how well

they are starting to read. Skilled staff provide high-quality support for those that need to catch up. Books closely match the sounds that pupils need to practise, and support is regularly reviewed to ensure that it is impactful. As a result, pupils quickly become fluent readers as they move through the year groups.

Staff have high expectations of how pupils should behave. Across the school, relationships between adults and pupils are warm and respectful. Almost all pupils focus keenly on their learning. From early years, routines are well established. Pupils know what to expect and develop a high level of independence quickly. However, a few pupils across the school do not always follow the instructions staff give them and lack focus in lessons. However, leaders are taking action to address this.

Pupils' personal development is exceptional. The school provides extremely strong welfare and pastoral support steered by the school's values. The school's extensive nurture provision effectively identifies and addresses the social and emotional needs of each child. This has led to pupils' attendance improving over time. Pupils talk with a deep understanding about relationships, growing up and what it means to be healthy.

Leaders are highly ambitious for all pupils, staff and the community that they serve. A well-structured programme of training supports strong teaching. The school prioritises staff's workload and well-being. Staff value the collaborative working within the trust schools which supports their teaching. The trust and local governance committee fulfil their statutory duties with expertise, ensuring a strong partnership across the trust.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a few subjects, it is not yet clear what pupils need to know and when they need to know it. This means that pupils cannot systematically build their knowledge and skills over time in all areas of the curriculum. The school must ensure that there is a precise order of learning in all subjects, setting out exactly what pupils will learn and when.
- In some subjects, teachers do not use assessment well enough. Where this is the case, some pupils do not remember what they have learned before in sufficient detail. The school must ensure that teachers in all subjects assess what pupils know equally effectively.

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	143262
Local authority	Medway
Inspection number	10296438
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	573
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Justin Stuart
Headteacher	Simon McLean
Website	www.hoo-st-werburgh.medway.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	17 and 18 September 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- This is an above-average-size primary school.
- This school is a part of the Rivermead Inclusive Trust.
- The school has a specially resourced provision, called the Marlborough, for pupils who have autism. There are 84 pupils, from Reception to Year 6, currently attending the Marlborough. All have complex needs and attend the centre on a full-time basis. A small number of pupils also participate in a few lessons in the mainstream classes. All pupils who attend the Marlborough Centre have a statement of SEND.

Information about this inspection

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

- 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 inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in the evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with senior leaders, staff and pupils. The lead inspector also met with the representatives of the local governing board and the chair of trustees. Inspectors also met with the trust's deputy chief executive officer and director of school improvement.
- The inspection team carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, history, science and French. They discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, teachers and pupils. Inspectors also visited lessons and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors considered the responses to the Ofsted Parent View questionnaire, including the free-text comments. They also took account of the responses to the confidential staff survey and gathered the views of both staff and pupils throughout the inspection.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors: 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.
- Inspectors reviewed and scrutinised a range of the school's documentation, including leaders' plans for improving the school, minutes of local governing board meetings and records of attendance and behaviour incidents.

Inspection team

Neil Pilsworth, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Leah Morgan

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Jo Brinkley

His Majesty's Inspector

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