

Wilmington Primary School

Common Lane, Wilmington, Dartford, Kent DA2 7DF

Inspection dates

19–20 June 2019

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The headteacher has taken effective action to improve the quality of teaching following a dip in outcomes.
- The newly introduced school values are being used effectively to drive improvements in teaching and learning.
- Leaders have improved the teaching of mathematics, and pupils' outcomes are increasing as a result.
- Leaders have used training effectively to develop a skilled staff team that is committed to every pupil achieving their best.
- Teachers plan and deliver lively, interesting and engaging lessons that result in good outcomes for pupils.
- Provision in the early years is good and improving.
- Pupils' behaviour is good and their attitudes to learning are positive. They enjoy school, and their attendance is above national averages.
- The strength of leadership beyond the headteacher is growing within the school.
- The curriculum provides pupils with a range of interesting and meaningful learning opportunities across a wide range of subjects.
- Safeguarding is effective. Leaders have improved systems for recording concerns and these are followed up quickly and robustly.
- Sports premium funding is used highly effectively to provide pupils with opportunities to participate in clubs and competitions
- The majority of parents are positive about the changes that have been introduced by the headteacher but would welcome more information about their children's progress in school.
- Governors know the school well and provide strong challenge and support. They are reflective and have sought to improve their work by accessing training and support.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Develop the quality of teaching, including in early years, by ensuring that adults use every opportunity to challenge and extend pupils' knowledge and understanding.
- Develop senior leaders and subject leaders to secure their effectiveness in improving teaching and further improving the curriculum.
- Improve the quality of communication with parents so that they are kept regularly informed about their children's progress and how decisions taken by leaders affect their children.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Following her appointment in September 2017, the headteacher accurately evaluated the school's strengths and areas for development and has taken decisive action to secure improvements. Leaders and governors have managed staffing turbulence effectively and outcomes are improving. One pupil explained, 'Our headteacher wants us to excel and our learning has got better.'
- Leadership beyond the headteacher has contributed to the success of the school and this is particularly true in the improvements to the teaching of mathematics. However, leaders' plans to ensure that leadership at all levels has a positive impact on pupils' learning are not yet fully embedded.
- Leaders' checks on the quality of teaching and learning are rigorous. They work closely with staff to evaluate the impact of teaching on pupils and provide challenge and support to secure improvements where they are required.
- Training for staff is used well to develop the skills and expertise of teachers. Leaders have carefully selected support from outside the school to improve the quality of teaching. This has had a particularly positive impact on the school's approach to the teaching of mathematics, which has resulted in pupils making improved rates of progress. Staff are grateful for the support and training that they receive and speak positively about how it has helped them develop their practice.
- Leaders consulted with the whole school community when identifying the Wilmington values of resilience, positivity, teamwork, compassion and self-belief. Since their introduction at the beginning of the school year, the values have been used to help form a strong culture of collaboration between pupils and staff. One pupil explained, 'The school's values make people try harder and believe in themselves.'
- The curriculum has been improved so that progression in pupils' learning is carefully planned for across all subjects. Pupils describe learning as fun because teachers plan lessons that are engaging and interesting. They recall what they have learned across a range of subjects. A particular highlight for Year 5 was their 'Tudor week', which culminated in them dressing up in Tudor costumes and acting in a Shakespeare play. Music is a strength of the curriculum, and over time pupils successfully develop their knowledge and skills. Pupils in Year 4 spoke eagerly about going to play as part of an orchestra at another local school, an opportunity that is an established part of the curriculum.
- The use of the primary school physical education (PE) and sport premium funding has been highly effective. Clear plans for spending the funding have resulted in a significant increase in the number of pupils taking part in extra-curricular clubs and competitions.
- Leaders have ensured that the school's values support strong spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and fundamental British values. In an assembly, pupils were observed listening carefully to differing points of view with respect and consideration. Pupils have a good understanding of diversity and the different cultures and faiths

within the United Kingdom. One pupil explained, 'We don't mind what people look like here, we can be friends with anyone.'

- The majority of parents would recommend the school and are supportive of the changes made by the headteacher. Staffing changes have caused some parents to feel concerned, but more recent stability has reassured them. Parents, including those of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), would welcome more information about how their children are progressing. Leaders are already considering the most effective way to do this.

Governance of the school

- Governors provide robust challenge and support to the school. They have recently reviewed their skills and structure and sought external support to help accomplish this. They are honest about previous weaknesses in their ability to evaluate the performance of the school and have taken decisive action to improve their effectiveness.
- Governors have a detailed understanding of pupil outcomes and receive valuable information from school leaders to enable them to evaluate performance. Their regular and focused visits to the school allow them to check the information that is shared and be confident in their evaluations.
- They carefully monitor the spending of additional funding for disadvantaged pupils. As a result, the small number of disadvantaged pupils make the same good rates of progress as other pupils nationally.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders use training well to ensure that staff have the skills and expertise to identify concerns and take effective action when required. Systems for recording safeguarding information are clear and well understood by all staff. Detailed record-keeping enables leaders to access external support swiftly when required.
- Leaders ensure that appropriate checks are carried out on all adults appointed to work at the school.
- Leaders and governors conduct an annual audit of safeguarding. Actions arising from the audit that can further strengthen the culture of safeguarding are completed in a timely way and their impact is monitored by governors.
- Pupils said that they feel safe in school and always have someone to talk to if they have any concerns or worries. The curriculum provides pupils with opportunities to learn how to stay safe. For example, in Years 4 and 5 a group of pupils have been trained as e-safety ambassadors and they contribute to the school's work to keep pupils safe online.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teaching is well planned, and lessons are delivered by teachers in a lively and energetic way. This results in pupils being enthusiastic and engaged in their learning.
- There is a strong level of consistency in the teaching of English and mathematics across the school. This results in pupils making good progress over time. The school's work to improve the teaching of mathematics through the development of its 'build it, draw it, solve it' approach is helping teachers build on pupils' understanding of mathematical concepts over time.
- Phonics is taught well and allows pupils to read unfamiliar words and texts effectively. Improvements to the way reading is taught throughout the school are helping pupils make stronger progress. Pupils are keen to read and are grateful for the improvements to the school libraries.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge. They provide clear and precise explanations that result in pupils improving their understanding. Teachers' effective questioning helps pupils understand new learning and build on what they already know.
- Collaboration between pupils when they are reviewing each other's work is a strength. Teachers teach pupils to be reflective learners and help them to be able to provide constructive feedback to peers. This helps pupils to identify both what they have done well and the areas of their learning that they could improve upon.
- Teachers establish clear and crisp routines, and classrooms are well organised and managed. This results in a positive climate for learning, and pupils are clear about what is expected of them.
- Teachers use assessment information during lessons to identify pupils who would benefit from additional support. This information is then used effectively to ensure that any gaps or misconceptions that pupils have are quickly filled.
- Teachers are ambitious for the pupils in their care and generally hold high expectations of them. However, there are times when pupils are not sufficiently challenged. Some tasks that pupils complete are not designed well enough and pupils find them too simple.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- The school values lie at the heart of the positive relationships between pupils and staff. Teachers support pupils' personal development by linking the school values to the tasks and activities that pupils complete in class and helping them to reflect on their success as learners.
- Pupils have a clear understanding of what bullying is and say that very little occurs within the school. They look out for each other and are proactive about including their peers in games at lunchtime. Pupils described how they use the friendship bench at play times to make sure that no one is left out.

- Pupils know how to lead healthy lifestyles. Year 6 pupils spoke at length about the harmful effects of illegal drugs and tobacco, and discussed the ways that they could avoid peer pressure as they get older. A large number of pupils participate in extra-curricular sports.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils, parents and staff agree that the school makes sure that its pupils are well behaved.
- The positive approach to behaviour management results in pupils setting high expectations of themselves. Every week, two pupils from each class are chosen to sit on the golden table at lunchtime in recognition of their efforts to live out the school values and behave in a positive way.
- The majority of pupils engage well with their lessons. Pupils report that they are able to concentrate in class, and no low-level disruption was observed during the inspection. Occasionally pupils drift off task when learning does not sufficiently challenge them.
- The school is uncompromising in its drive to ensure that attendance rates are good for all pupils. Over the past two years, attendance for all groups of pupils has improved because of robust systems and effective leadership.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- In 2018 the proportion of pupils achieving national expectations in mathematics in Year 6 declined below national averages. With the improvements to the quality of teaching and the mathematics curriculum, pupils are once again making good progress.
- Attainment in writing is above national averages and is a strength of the school. The English curriculum is designed around a spine of high-quality texts that inspire and motivate pupils when they come to write. Pupils are keen to write but the quality of handwriting is inconsistent because the policy for how it is taught is not clear.
- The regular monitoring of teaching is linked to the progress of groups of pupils. This supports teachers in making sure that all groups of pupils make the same good progress.
- In 2018 the proportion of boys achieving the expected standard in the phonics check in Year 1 was significantly lower than girls. This was quickly identified and additional support put in place so that these pupils are now on track with their knowledge and understanding of phonics.
- Progress in subjects other than English and mathematics is good. This is because teachers plan and deliver sequences of learning over time that build on pupils' skills and knowledge. The teaching of science is a strength in the curriculum. Over time, pupils' explanations of cause and effect in experiments they conduct become increasingly detailed and pupils accurately use scientific vocabulary.

- Pupils' attainment in key stage 1 has been consistently above national averages over time. The proportion of pupils achieving the higher standards in reading, writing and mathematics has increased in recent years, and this trend is continuing.
- The breadth of the curriculum, together with good-quality teaching, means that pupils in Year 6 are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Early years provision

Good

- Leaders have acted swiftly and decisively to improve the quality of provision in the early years. Improvements to the setting mean that pupils now learn in a well-organised and purposeful environment with appropriate provision inside the classroom and in the outdoor area.
- Teaching is good because the school has acted effectively on the advice it sought from external sources to improve staff skills. Teachers and supporting adults assess children's learning accurately and use this information to plan effectively for children's next steps. However, adults' explanations and questions are not always precise enough to move learning on quickly. Some tasks that the most able children complete lack challenge.
- The opportunities provided for children engage and motivate them. They play imaginatively, making good use of the equipment and resources provided for them. Children's curiosity is encouraged throughout the curriculum and they are confident to take risks.
- Children's behaviour is good, and they listen carefully to adults and each other. They demonstrate a good understanding of how to stay safe when exploring the outside environment, and enjoy using the large rope to find their way up and down the bank to the grassy area.
- Children make good progress. The curriculum has been adapted in response to boys' outcomes being lower than girls' in the past. This has resulted in significant improvements to the number of boys on track to achieve a good level of development at the end of the year and prepare them well for their transition to Year 1.
- Children's transition into school is carefully planned for. Staff visit children at home and in their nursery settings before they begin school and are well informed about the children when they join school. This results in the children settling well into school and quickly becoming confident in the Reception class.
- Parents are grateful for the care and support that their children receive. Leaders actively encourage parents and carers to be involved in their children's learning. An example of this was when dads were encouraged into the classroom on Fathers' Day to make paper aeroplanes and boats with their children.

School details

Unique reference number	137663
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10088063

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	210
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Karin Clements
Headteacher	Charlotte Scott
Telephone number	01322 274 080
Website	www.wilmingtonprimaryschool.co.uk
Email address	jreynolds@wilmington-cp.kent.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	June 2015

Information about this school

- Wilmington Primary School is a stand-alone academy converter. The governance structure of the school has been reviewed to separate the roles of members and trustees. Trustees refer to themselves as the governing body and are responsible for holding the school to account.
- The school is average in size.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported by the pupil premium is low.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is low.
- Most pupils are of a White British background and few pupils speak English as an additional language.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed teaching and learning in all classes. Half of these observations were carried out with a member of the school's leadership team.
- During visits to lessons, inspectors spoke with pupils and looked at their work to find out more about how well they are learning.
- Inspectors scrutinised pupils' books across a range of subjects to evaluate the progress pupils are making in English, mathematics and the wider curriculum.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read and met formally with a group of pupils to discuss their experience of school.
- Many other pupils were spoken to informally around the school.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher and other leaders as well as class teachers.
- The lead inspector met with representatives of the governing body
- A range of school documents and information was scrutinised, including: the school development plan; checks on the quality of teaching; curriculum plans; minutes of governors' meetings; and behaviour and attendance records.
- Inspectors also looked at arrangements and records for safeguarding procedures.
- During the inspection 74 responses to the online survey, Parent View, and the 35 written comments from parents were considered. Inspectors also held informal discussions with parents.

Inspection team

James Freeston, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Sean McKeown

Ofsted Inspector

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