

Warden Park Primary Academy

New England Road, Haywards Heath, RH16 3JR

Inspection dates 10–11 June 2015

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|--------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------|
| Overall effectiveness | Previous inspection: | Requires improvement | 3 |
| | This inspection: | Good | 2 |
| Leadership and management | | Good | 2 |
| Behaviour and safety of pupils | | Good | 2 |
| Quality of teaching | | Good | 2 |
| Achievement of pupils | | Good | 2 |
| Early years provision | | Good | 2 |

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- This is a school which has improved considerably under the leadership of the well-respected headteacher and the directors of the multi-academy trust.
- Parents are enthusiastic in their praise for the work of the school.
- Leaders have taken the right actions so that teaching has improved significantly and many pupils are making rapid progress.
- Pupils get off to a much better start than they did in the past. The quality of provision in the early years and Key Stage 1 is ensuring pupils are much better prepared for the next steps in their education.
- Pupils are very proud of their school and feel safe in the care of their teachers. The systems to keep pupils safe are robust.
- Pupils' behaviour around the school and in lessons is generally good. There are a small number of pupils who display challenging behaviour and the school has sensible approaches to helping these pupils improve their conduct.
- Teachers are committed to continuing the school's improvement journey.
- The school is good at identifying gaps in pupils' knowledge and skills and providing additional support or, in the early years, direct teaching to fill these gaps.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Some teachers are not always rigorous enough in their expectations of pupils' behaviour in lessons and the quality of presentation in their books. As a result, in some lessons, these important standards slip.
- Leaders are not always quick enough at identifying where teachers are less insistent about the quality of presentation in books and standards of behaviour in lessons.
- There is a continuing legacy of underachievement, particularly in upper Key Stage 2. This means that, despite the accelerated progress made by many children, the cohorts in Years 5 and 6 are likely to leave with some remaining underachievement.
- Pupils in Key Stage 2 have gaps in their knowledge of number. Some are unable to recall multiplication facts which they should know, and this holds them back when solving mathematical problems.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors spent the majority of their time observing in lessons or talking with pupils. Inspectors observed in every classroom at least once and looked at work in pupils' books while observing the quality of teaching. Some lesson observations were conducted with either the headteacher or the deputy headteacher.
- Inspectors also listened to children read and made brief observations of small group sessions, including those for teaching phonics (the sounds that letters make) and an instrumental music session.
- The views of parents and carers were considered, including 39 which were given through Parent View (Ofsted's online questionnaire). Inspectors talked to a number of parents on the playground at the end of the school day.
- As well as ongoing informal conversations with pupils, inspectors spoke with two groups of pupils to better understand their views of, and experiences in, the school.
- Interviews were also conducted with teachers, subject leaders, senior leaders and members of the academy trust board.

Inspection team

Michael Sheridan, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Sir Robin Boshier

Her Majesty's Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a broadly average-sized school which has grown considerably in the last few years.
- The academy is part of the Warden Park Academy Trust.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium (additional funding for specific groups, including those known to be eligible for free school meals and those looked after by the local authority) is above the national average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups and pupils who speak English as an additional language is also above the national average. Pupils come from a wide range of ethnic groups.
- About 60% of pupils are White British and the next biggest ethnic group is other White background, which represents just under 10% of the school population.
- The school meets the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- Early years provision consists of two full-time Reception classes. The school accommodates a privately run Nursery, which is inspected separately under a different inspection framework.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the teaching of mathematics, particularly in Key Stage 2, by
 - ensuring pupils become better able to recall multiplication facts rapidly and use these facts to solve challenging mathematical problems
 - ensuring all teachers have the highest expectations of what pupils can achieve in mathematics.
- Ensure all teachers have a consistently high expectation of behaviour in class and the quality and work in books, and that leaders are tenacious in their monitoring of high standards in these areas.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- Leaders have created a very positive culture within the academy. Staff are overwhelmingly supportive of the improvements in the school and the plans for future. There is a tangible sense of purpose throughout the school. Staff work hard because they understand what they are working to achieve.
- The headteacher is an inspiring leader. He has garnered the support of those around him and he has led the improvement of teaching well. As a result, middle leaders all understand exactly what they need to do to improve their areas further and all can point to the improvements already made.
- While teaching and behaviour are good overall, there are times when the high standards expected of pupils' behaviour and work are not consistently maintained. At times, leaders are too slow in picking up on such slippages.
- Leaders have made sensible decisions about the use of the pupil premium and, as a result, pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds are making better progress than they have in the past.
- The curriculum is broad and exciting. Pupils enjoy the range of topics through which they learn and teachers use these topics to plan effective opportunities for pupils to practise literacy skills. Through the curriculum, pupils learn about fundamental British values, so they are well prepared to live in modern Britain.
- Leaders effectively tackle discrimination and promote harmony and tolerance amongst all pupils. Racism is rare and pupils are confident that racist incidents are dealt with quickly by staff. Similarly, other forms of bullying are also rare, and most pupils and parents are content that leaders tackle such issues well.
- Safeguarding arrangements meet statutory requirements and are regularly reviewed by leaders and directors.
- Additional funding, through the primary PE and sports premium, is well spent on providing specialist PE teaching, swimming and extra-curricular activities. As a result, pupils are more active, and achievement in PE has risen. This funding is also being used to improve teachers' skills so they are better able to provide high quality PE.
- The multi-academy trust provides support and challenge in equal measure. It has a significant impact on school improvement. Resources are made available to support school improvement. Expertise from the secondary school has been used effectively to improve the quality of teaching.
- Attendance is improving. The school is tenacious in following up on absence and improving the attendance of those who are regularly absent. While attendance remains a little below average, it has improved considerably over the past two years.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The academy board of directors are responsible for the governance of the school. Collectively they bring a wide range of skills and experience which support the development of the academy and the wider trust.
 - Directors have a very clear understanding of the strengths of the school. They are proud of the improvements made, without becoming complacent about the next steps needed to improve the school further.
 - Directors are well informed about the academy's performance. They balance the views of the headteacher with those of other leaders, external evaluations and their own observations.
 - Directors are rigorous in the way they hold senior leaders to account. They are able to show how performance management is used to reward strengths and challenge underperformance.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils are proud of their school and treat staff, their peers and property with respect.
- Classes run smoothly and, in most cases, low-level disruption is tackled quickly and decisively by staff. In a small number of lessons and sometimes on the playground, teachers do not enforce their expectations of behaviour and, where this is the case, some children are slow to respond to teachers' requests and continue to chatter or play.
- Bullying is rare and children say that staff deal with issues of bullying quickly. Some parents and children talk about the annoying behaviour of a few who irritate others with silliness in classrooms. Inspectors

found that such incidents have reduced significantly but a small number remain.

- The school is successful in supporting pupils with challenging behaviour to improve their conduct.
- Pupils enjoy school and are responsible around the school and in the playground.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good.
- All systems to keep pupils safe are in place and meet requirements.
- Pupils learn about the dangers they might face, for example when using the internet, and they understand how they must behave to remain safe.
- Pupils trust their teachers and say that they know they can talk to their teachers about issues they face.

The quality of teaching

is good

- As a result of good teaching, pupils are making better progress and many are catching up from their previously weak progress. Teachers are very clear about what they are striving to achieve and, as a body, are committed to playing their part in improving the opportunities available to pupils.
- The teaching of mathematics has improved, particularly in Key Stage 1 where pupils are developing a good understanding of numbers. However, in Key Stage 2, some children still lack some basic number skills and too many cannot recall basic facts like multiplications. Occasionally in lessons, teachers over-compensate for this by giving work which does not make pupils think hard enough.
- Literacy skills are taught well throughout the school. Pupils have a good grasp of grammar and an increasingly varied vocabulary to draw from. Pupils make good progress in reading and they are able to use their understanding of the sounds that letters make to work out unfamiliar words, both when reading and when spelling.
- Teachers constantly remind pupils of the need to use varied and accurate vocabulary in their speech and writing. As a result, pupils make good progress in their writing comprehension.
- In some books, pupils' work is not presented with consistent care and teachers are inconsistent in addressing careless mistakes and messy work. This limits the progress made by some pupils as they do not always produce work which shows what they are capable of.

The achievement of pupils

is good

- While there remains a legacy of underachievement, particularly in Years 5 and 6, the progress which pupils are making throughout the school is good or better. Standards of attainment improved last year and were in line with the national average at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2.
- Pupils from different ethnic groups, and boys and girls, make similar progress to each other throughout the school. Where the performance of a particular group dips, or a group outperforms their peers, this only appears in one year group and no overall pattern exists to suggest any group is performing significantly differently to others.
- Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because they are usually well supported in class and through the additional help and support they receive. Additional reading and phonics sessions are proving particularly useful in helping these pupils become competent readers and writers.
- Pupil premium funding is being used effectively to accelerate the progress of eligible pupils. This improvement is more noticeable lower down the school, with these pupils making very convincing progress in early years and Key Stage 1. In Key Stage 2, gaps are closing overall, but some of their progress is uneven over time.
- Last year, Year 6 pupils who were eligible for pupil premium funding made better progress than their peers in school in the past in reading and writing, but not in mathematics. They were about a year behind all pupils nationally in reading and writing, and two terms in mathematics.
- Very few pupils have reached higher levels of attainment in Key Stage 1 in the past, although more are now doing so, particularly in mathematics. Inspection evidence shows that these children are being challenged in most lessons, with work in books showing good progress over time. The most able pupils are challenged across the curriculum to think more deeply and produce a high standard of work.

The early years provision is good

- The early years provision is much stronger than it has been in the past and, as a result, children are better prepared for Key Stage 1.
- Leaders are very clear about the need for the curriculum and teaching to be consistently good enough to enable children to overcome weaknesses in their literacy and social development. Leaders have high expectations. Their work to improve the setting and the quality of teaching is impressive.
- Adults have high expectations of children, both when they are learning through play and when they are taking part in adult-led activities.
- The outdoor environment is rich and vibrant, with activities designed to encourage sharing and talking.
- Adults are tireless in their support of children's social skills, and support children as they play by encouraging them in their talking and decision making.
- Adult-led sessions are focused on developing important academic skills, and more formal classroom activities are pitched well so children enjoy learning and understand the way they need to behave in the classroom. As a result, children behave well.
- Staff keep diligent records of children's achievements and use these records to inform their planning. This means that activities are well matched to children's abilities and interests.
- The early years provision, as with the rest of the school, enjoys a very positive relationship with parents.
- The environment is safe and children learn about staying safe when at home and in school.

What inspection judgements mean

| School | Grade | Judgement | Description |
|--------|---------|----------------------|--|
| | Grade 1 | Outstanding | An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment. |
| | Grade 2 | Good | A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment. |
| | Grade 3 | Requires improvement | A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection. |
| | Grade 4 | Inadequate | <p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> |

School details

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| Unique reference number | 137211 |
| Local authority | West Sussex |
| Inspection number | 464924 |

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

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| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Academy sponsor-led |
| Age range of pupils | 4–11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 260 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Jonathan Ash-Edwards |
| Headteacher | Steve Davis |
| Date of previous school inspection | 9 October 2013 |
| Telephone number | 01444451264 |
| Email address | office@wardenparkprimary.co.uk |

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