

Warden House Primary School

Birdwood Avenue, Deal, Kent, CT14 9SF

Inspection dates 2–3 December 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected
	This inspection:	Outstanding 1
Leadership and management	Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils	Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching	Outstanding	1
Achievement of pupils	Outstanding	1
Early years provision	Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- In the words of a member of staff, 'The school is going from strength to strength. It is a positive and vibrant place to work.'
- Achievement is outstanding. From very low starting points, pupils make rapid progress. At the end of Year 6, all groups of pupils, including the most able, are now reaching well above average standards. Disadvantaged pupils make excellent progress, particularly in their reading and writing.
- Teachers are expert at planning interesting activities with challenge. Their comments to pupils during lessons, together with their marking, make sure that pupils know how to improve their work.
- Teaching assistants are highly skilled and provide excellent support for the pupils with whom they work.
- Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. Pupils of all ages play and learn together harmoniously. All parents agree that the school makes sure that pupils are well behaved. The school works hard to promote a very positive attitude towards behaviour for all pupils.
- The principal is an inspirational leader. He and his deputy are highly ambitious and share a clear vision for raising standards.
- Pupils feel very safe. This view is fully supported by all parents and staff. Pupils thrive and develop into confident young people who are fully prepared for their next steps in education.
- Outstanding teaching and learning in each key stage enable pupils to make quick and sustained progress in all subjects. As a result, all groups regardless of their level of ability are doing well throughout the school.
- As a result of outstanding teaching, children get off to a flying start in the Reception class.
- The school rightly describes its curriculum as 'irresistible' and provides a range of enriching and exciting activities. As a result, pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted effectively.
- Leaders and managers, together with governors, are fully committed to providing a high standard of education for all pupils. Their actions have had a direct, positive impact on the rapidly improved quality of teaching and pupils' achievement.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 23 lessons or part lessons, some of which were seen together with the principal and the deputy principal.
- Discussions were held with pupils, the principal and the deputy principal, subject leaders, members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority. Inspectors talked informally to pupils at lunchtime and break times, observed them in assemblies and around the school. They also listened to them read.
- In addition, inspectors looked at pupils' books and a range of documents, including the school's evaluation of its performance and its development plan. They also scrutinised information on pupils' progress, checks on teachers' effectiveness, reports from the local authority, and records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.
- The inspectors took account of 52 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and 40 responses to the staff questionnaire. Inspectors met both informally with parents at the beginning and end of the school day and formally during the inspection.

Inspection team

Gay Whent, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
David Grant	Additional Inspector
Carol Vant	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Warden House Primary School is larger than most primary schools.
- Warden House Primary School converted to become an academy on 1 January 2013. When its predecessor school, with the same name, was last inspected by Ofsted it was judged to be requiring improvement.
- The school is currently part of a multi-academy trust with a local secondary school, Castle Community College.
- The school is a member of the Deal Learning Alliance, a cluster of 10 primary schools.
- There are 14 classes, including two Reception classes. The Reception children attend full time.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils who are supported by the pupil premium is above average. This is additional government funding to support pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals or looked after children. There are currently very few looked after children at the school.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is above average.
- The school hosts on-site breakfast and after-school clubs. These are managed by the governing body and are reported on as part of the current inspection.
- There is a privately run pre-school on the same site. It is inspected separately.
- The school meets the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- The school needs to explore further opportunities to extend collaborative links locally and nationally to share their outstanding practice.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The Principal, ably supported by the deputy Principal and the effective governing body, provides clear and decisive leadership. Everyone is valued in this large, friendly school and there is very strong sense of purpose in the school's journey towards excellence. All staff share this vision, as shown by the wholly positive responses to the staff questionnaire.
- School leaders have ensured that there is a very strong focus on improving teaching and learning. They evaluate the performance of staff every six weeks and accurately appraise their effectiveness. Increases in staff salary are closely linked to performance. Leaders coach, mentor and support teachers in order for them to carry out their roles to a high standard. A member of staff observed that there is an 'excellent commitment by all teaching staff to extend pupils' learning'. This strong leadership has created a culture in which teaching and good behaviour flourish.
- Subject and other leaders have a very clear understanding of their areas of responsibility which they share in teams. They have a very clear view of what needs to be done to raise standards even higher. A very strong emphasis is placed on developing literacy and numeracy skills. At the end of Year 6, the pupils' achievement is outstanding. Their attainment is now above other pupils nationally.
- Additional government funding is used so effectively to support the needs of eligible pupils that nearly three quarters of them made well above average progress in their reading by the end of Year 6 in 2014. These pupils achieve better than similar pupils nationally in reading and almost as well as all other pupils nationally in writing and mathematics too.
- Communications with parents are effective. Fostering good relationships is a shared responsibility for everybody in the school's community.
- Everyone commits ensuring that all pupils achieve their potential, that they have equal opportunities to prosper and that there is no discrimination.
- The leadership for pupils who are disabled or have special educational needs is very effective. They attain well and make good or better progress. This is because their needs are accurately identified and their progress is assessed regularly so that they do not fall behind.
- The school has fully implemented the new National Curriculum. Teachers have structured a vibrant and exciting curriculum for all pupils. Older pupils are fully immersed in their study of the Second World War. They enjoy reading non-fiction books on this subject, as well as poetry and fiction. There is very active celebration of reading in this school. The large, well-stocked library is full of many books for every age range and interest. It is in full use every day. The school's reading target was exceeded last year when pupils read more than 26,000 books!
- The school's 'irresistible' curriculum supports pupils' academic, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development very well. Pupils learn about other cultures and religions through assemblies and lessons. They are all well prepared for life in modern Britain. The school actively promotes respect and tolerance through its values. The school's exemplary practice is shared through its partnerships with other schools. The impact of this is evident in the increased range and quality of learning opportunities for staff, as well as pupils. The school has yet to explore further opportunities to develop these collaborative links fully.
- The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils are effective and meet statutory requirements. All paperwork and policies are accurate and up to date.
- The local authority provides light touch support, as requested by the school.
- The school is making very good use of the primary sport funding, which is allocated carefully. The school is using the funding so that more pupils are able to participate in a wider range of activities. These include fencing, golf, orienteering and archery, as well as competitive sporting activities such as rugby and hockey.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors know the school very well. They are particularly well informed about the quality of teaching. They monitor teachers' targets closely and understand what has been carried out to tackle any underperformance. They also ensure that good teaching over the year is both recognised and rewarded.
 - Governors challenge the performance of the school in terms of achievement, as well as attendance. They know how the school performs compared to other schools nationally. They are well trained and use their valuable range of expertise to improve the school's performance.
 - Governors take a very active part in monitoring. They do this several times throughout the academic year. As a result, they are very well placed to ask school leaders searching and challenging questions. They play a key role in stringently holding leaders to account. Procedures for keeping children safe fully meet requirements. Governors ensure that the school's finances are managed effectively, including

checking that additional funds successfully support pupils' achievement.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

are outstanding

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. All staff fully endorse the school's statement that 'it is every child's right to learn and every teacher's right to teach'. Everyone follows the Warden House vision words, 'positive, independent, determined, successful, partners, responsible', which are displayed throughout the school, on a range of items from rugs to stickers.
- Almost all parents agree that their children are happy at the school and well looked after. Staff unanimously agree with this. The school enjoys very positive relationships with parents.
- Pupils display a thirst for knowledge and a love of learning. They find it easy to talk about the best things in the school; older pupils in Year 6 could think of nothing that would make them enjoy school and learn better.
- The school is a happy and very welcoming learning community. Pupils are polite and friendly to visitors.
- Pupils enjoy playtimes and lunchtimes. Older pupils join in with a range of activities and also have responsibilities to keep them busily engaged. They willingly carry out litter picking and leaf-sweeping duties to keep their playground safe from accidents. The Golden Club supports those pupils who find lunchtimes challenging. Here they learn how to play with their peers and are back on the playground within a few weeks. Children who stay for the after-school club enjoy the activities on offer.
- At the heart of this exemplary behaviour are the excellent relationships between pupils and adults. These are a real strength of the school. These are seen in lessons, on the playground, in assemblies, in the dining hall or at the after-school club. All staff work tirelessly to foster these excellent relationships. When the whistle is blown at the end of any break time activity, pupils stop what they are doing immediately and listen.
- A high priority is placed on regular attendance. Every week, the principal applauds high attendance as well as punctuality in the school's Friday celebration assembly. Attendance is currently above the national average. The breakfast club encourages pupils to arrive at school on time.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding.
- Pupils, and their parents agree, feel very safe in this school. They know how to keep safe when they use the internet. Recent assemblies have highlighted, in a way that pupils understand, how to avoid cyber bullying.
- Older pupils say that they cannot remember when there was bullying in the school; they know the difference between bullying and 'silly fall-outs'. They know exactly which adult to go to if they need any help. They trust the staff on duty at lunchtime as much as their teachers.
- One parent described the care given by the school as 'a high level of expertise which I never dreamt anyone would receive from a school'.

The quality of teaching

is outstanding

- Leaders' emphasis on rigorously improving teaching and learning has resulted in teaching being outstanding. The whole school focus on improving learning has contributed strongly to sustained improvement as pupils move up through the school. Pupils are taught extremely well in an atmosphere where all are valued.
- Teachers, together with their teaching assistants, regularly and thoroughly assess pupils' learning. They are quick to notice where pupils may show any misunderstanding; careful explanation enables pupils to move on in their learning at a more rapid pace.
- The impact of teaching on learning and achievement in literacy, reading and mathematics is seen through the pupils' outstanding progress which is above national values. The school's current data are already reflecting this trend.
- Teachers and their assistants use questioning very skilfully to move learning forward. This enables pupils to deepen their understanding, whether this is in reading, writing or mathematics. One parent stated: 'What a fabulous school this is! The teachers are very committed. Their relationships with the children are excellent.'
- Teachers have high expectations for pupils' behaviour and this ensures a calm, purposeful atmosphere as

pupils work.

- Pupils take great care when they present their learning. Teachers' marking is careful and of consistently high quality, whatever the age of the pupil. Their comments help pupils understand the next steps in their learning.

The achievement of pupils

is outstanding

- Standards in reading, writing and mathematics have risen rapidly throughout the school since it opened as an academy in January 2013. There has been a very rigorous focus on improving teaching and learning. High proportions of pupils make exceptional progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils eligible for additional funding make outstanding progress, especially in their reading and writing. Their needs are accurately identified and effective strategies put into place to help them learn well. The school's reading club has had a very positive influence on their attainment and progress.
- The difference in average point scores in writing and mathematics at Key Stage 2 between disadvantaged pupils and all other pupils nationally is small. Their attainment in reading is above that of all other pupils nationally. The difference between their attainment and other pupils in the school is also very small in all subjects. The school is very successful in closing the gaps.
- Attainment in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 2 is now above average. This has been improving year on year. Pupils make good or better progress from the start of Year 1.
- Achievements of the most able pupils are above other pupils nationally at the end of Year 2 in reading and writing. They are in line with other pupils nationally in mathematics. Many able older pupils attain the highest levels in mathematics and writing. Challenging tasks enable a significantly number of the most able pupils to reach these high levels, especially in their grammar, punctuation and spelling.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs attain well and make good or better progress. This is because teachers set work at just the right level of difficulty and provide highly effective support and guidance whenever they are needed.

The early years provision

is outstanding

- Children enter Reception with starting points which are below what is typical for their age, some of them significantly so. They make at least good, and often exceptional, progress in their speaking and listening. Since September, children have got off to a very good start as they are well looked after in a caring and stimulating environment. In 2014, most children achieved the expected level of development by the end of the summer term. The gap in attainment is closing.
- Current checks on children's progress are accurate and rigorous. All early years staff have a detailed knowledge of individual children and their learning needs. Teaching staff work together as a united team.
- Leadership and management are of a very high standard. During the end of the summer term, Year 1 staff work closely with Reception teachers so that they know, before they move up, all about children's learning needs as well as their abilities and achievements. As a result, little time is lost at the beginning of Year 1.
- Children play happily and extremely well together, both inside and outdoors. They learn equally well outside (dressed in warm coats and hats) as they do indoors. They are aware of the importance of routine and know how to keep safe. Their behaviour is excellent.
- A range of interesting activities provide opportunities to practise reading, writing and counting. Children present 'plays' on their stage outside, under a canopy, or in the classroom where they place chairs in just the right position for their audience. Two boys created a number scale with an adult and extended it to 19 as they measured how far their cars travel down a slide. Some children are equally happy playing by themselves or with others. A small group of pupils were keen to explore a book about the Arctic so they could find out about where Father Christmas lives.
- The quality of teaching is outstanding. The school has participated in national research relating to children's readiness for school, working in partnership with the National Health Service. The school shares its very good practice across schools in the collaboration. It is currently leading on the development of assessment at the start of the early years.
- Parents are highly supportive of the early years provision. They are happy with the way in which their children quickly settle into school life. They appreciate the meetings that prepare them for their children's life in school. They say their children are very keen to come to 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

Unique reference number	139186
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	451041

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	373
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Dan Jones
Principal	Graham Chisnell
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	01304 375040
Fax number	01304 371707
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