

Inspection of a school judged Good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: Lydden Primary School

Stonehall, Lydden, Dover, Kent CT15 7LA

Inspection dates:

17 December 2024

Outcome

Lydden Primary School has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils flourish in the care and high expectations of this small rural school. The school expects the best of all pupils, including those with special educational needs and or/disabilities (SEND). This is evident in the attitudes and work of the pupils themselves.

Pupils rise to meet the school's high expectations for behaviour. They are keen to show how much they know. As a result, pupils readily demonstrate they can remember and apply their knowledge in a range of different ways. They strive to not only rise to these school expectations but also to their own high aspirations. They feel a sense of fulfilment in their learning and are happy as part of the school's community of care and kindness.

Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of education. They relish the opportunities in school to take responsibility and grow as modern British citizens. Opportunities such as the pupil ambassadors, 'mini cadets' and 'mini medics' are deeply valued by pupils. Pupils see these roles having a meaningful impact in the school. Pupils are happy and know that if they are worried, they have adults who will listen and support them. This gives pupils a sense of safety.

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

The school has carefully chosen what pupils should know. The school has transitioned its curriculum to a new model in recent years. The school has worked to ensure that children in the mixed-age range classes learn key content in a methodical order. The number of pupils with (SEND) is significant and has steadily increased in recent years. The needs of these pupils are swiftly identified and there is effective support across the school in and out of classrooms.

Pupils' books and recall of key knowledge demonstrates that they are achieving well across the curriculum from the Reception class onwards. However, for some pupils the transition between curriculums has left some gaps in what they know. The school has a thorough plan for addressing this but has not yet finished the transition. Consequently, a few pupils do have some gaps in their learning, but the school is in the process of identifying and closing these.

Reading is a whole school priority. The reading curriculum is well established across the school. This includes the youngest children, who benefit from daily reading sessions. They methodically build their knowledge of different letter sounds in these sessions. Staff have been well trained, and they understand how to adapt their approach to meet the needs of pupils. As a result, reading is consistently well taught, and pupils are fluent and accurate readers. Pupils are given books that accurately match their reading ability. They are avid readers and share their love of reading books of different styles and by various authors. Consequently, there is a strongly positive atmosphere for reading and pupils are ready for the next stage of education.

Pupils are kind and polite. From the Reception class onwards, children are taught how to treat each other kindly and with respect. Pupils are proud of this and lunchtimes and classrooms show how they live up to this aspiration. Pupils' learning in classrooms is focused and effective. Pupils love learning and this shows in how they interact with positivity towards peers and adults. The school has a sharp focus on recording and addressing any incidents or pupils' concerns. The school makes a swift and effective response to any issues and works closely with families to resolve any worries. The school has a rigorous approach to attendance and carefully tracks which pupils regularly attend.

The school works effectively to broaden pupils' experiences and understanding. The school recognises that pupils go to much larger and more diverse schools after Year 6. They have consciously built opportunities for pupils to engage with a broad range of lived experiences beyond their own. Pupils across the school benefit from learning about other cultures, faiths and lifestyles. As a result, pupils are open minded and are ready to be accepting modern British citizens.

The school benefits from highly committed and well-informed leaders at all levels. The school has a strong ethos of seeking and developing professional development opportunities. Governors are equally engaged in their training. This means that they offer a rigorous challenge to the school. Governors meet all their duties and both support and challenge the school in equal measure. The schools size means that all staff have multiple responsibilities. Staff at all levels feel well supported in their work and there is a unity of purpose across the school that puts pupils first.

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 small number of curriculum areas where the curriculum is new, teachers deliver the subject content with less confidence. Explanations are sometimes not clear enough and the work that pupils are set, at times, does not support them to secure new learning in the way the curriculum is intended. As a result, pupils, particularly pupils with SEND who this impacts the most, are less secure in what they should know and understand. The school should continue to implement the curriculum with clear training and support for staff.

Background

Until September 2024, on a graded (section 5) inspection we gave schools an overall effectiveness grade, in addition to the key and provision judgements. Overall effectiveness grades given before September 2024 will continue to be visible on school inspection reports and on Ofsted's website. From September 2024 graded inspections will not include an overall effectiveness grade. This school was, before September 2024, judged good for its overall effectiveness.

We have now inspected the school to determine whether it has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at that previous inspection. 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's work has improved significantly or that it may not be as strong as it was at the last inspection, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection. A graded inspection 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 second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good for overall effectiveness in February 2015.

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	118400
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10341488
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	78
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Mrs Lisa Brown
Headteacher (acting)	Mrs Carla Lintott
Website	www.lydden.kent.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	5 February 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation 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 the school and have taken that into account in the evaluation of the school.
- During the inspection, inspectors spoke to leaders of the school, members of the governing body and representatives of the local authority and diocese.
- Inspectors considered the views expressed by staff and pupil to the online surveys and the responses of parents to the online parent survey, Ofsted Parent View.
- The inspectors visited a sample of lessons, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the 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.

Inspection team

Toby Martlew, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Tash Hurtado

Ofsted Inspector

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