

Inspection of West Malling Church of England Primary School and McGinty Speech and Language SRP

Old Cricket Ground, Norman Road, West Malling, Kent ME19 6RL

Inspection dates: 24 and 25 January 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
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Behaviour and attitudes	Good
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Personal development	Good
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Leadership and management	Good
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Early years provision	Good
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Previous inspection grade	Good
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What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy and thrive in this caring school. Children develop very positive friendships with one another. For example, older pupils take responsibility for children in the early years, reading to them and walking with them to the local church. This helps younger children to feel secure. Parents echo this and said, 'The school provides a supportive and nurturing environment.' Pupils learn about the school values and apply these to their school life. For example, the values of 'perseverance' and 'love' are lived out by pupils in their attitudes to work and friendships across the school.

Leaders have high ambition for all pupils. Staff ensure that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) who attend the school's specially resourced provision engage fully in the life of the school. As all pupils move through the school, they develop their knowledge and skills across a broad range of subjects well.

Pupils behave well and feel safe. When bullying happens, adults address this swiftly. Pupils encourage one another in class and enjoy the company of their friends when at play. One pupil expressed the views of many and said, 'Whatever happens, everyone is always there for you, the teachers and the pupils.'

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

Leaders provide a well-sequenced and ambitious curriculum. They deliver helpful training that gives teachers expert knowledge about what they teach. Trust leaders empower subject leaders to work alongside subject leaders from schools across the trust. This helps subject leaders to share ideas and develop their approach to curriculum delivery. Governors and trustees work well together to challenge leaders. When reviewing the curriculum, leaders have made sure that any changes introduced have not created undue workload for teachers. This ensures that teachers feel valued and make effective use of their time in class. While teachers are clear about what they need to teach, they are less clear about how they should teach the subject content. This leads to inconsistency in some subjects. As a result, while outcomes in national tests are strong, some pupils do not learn as well as they could in some subjects.

Teachers use regular checks to ensure they have a clear understanding of what pupils know and remember. They use this information to plan future lessons which build on what pupils have already learned. Teachers identify the needs of pupils with SEND swiftly and provide meaningful adaptations to the curriculum. For example, some pupils with SEND use visual prompts in lessons that help them to access the vocabulary needed to explain their thinking.

Teachers ensure that pupils gain the mathematical knowledge and skills they need to succeed. Children in the early years gain mathematical knowledge well. Teachers

craft meaningful opportunities for children to embed what they learn through play. Staff support children with SEND with a range of supportive resources in class. This makes sure that all children learn the mathematical knowledge and skills they need and prepares them well for the move to key stage 1.

Teachers support pupils well to develop into fluent and capable readers. Children in the early years learn the letter sounds that help them to learn to read. Teachers read a broad range of books to pupils that build their vocabulary. Teachers regularly check the progress pupils make in reading. This ensures that pupils who have fallen behind are supported to catch up quickly. However, some pupils read infrequently beyond lessons. This means they spend less time practising their reading skills compared with their peers.

Pupils behave well and show respect for one another. Leaders communicate their expectations for behaviour clearly. If pupils misbehave in lessons, staff redirect them gently to ensure that learning is not disrupted. Pupils make a very positive contribution to the life of the school. For example, pupils show a genuine care for one another at playtimes. Most pupils attend well and arrive at school on time.

Leaders provide a wide range of experiences to develop pupils' cultural understanding. Teachers encourage pupils to learn about life in modern Britain and use the school's values to guide their thinking. Pupils respect the views and beliefs of others. As one pupil said, 'Everyone has something different to others in life that should be respected.' Adults identify pupils who need support with their social and emotional needs well. Pupils receive targeted support that strengthens their emotional well-being. Leaders offer a range of clubs which are attended well and benefit pupils in the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure that staff receive timely and helpful training in how to keep pupils safe. Staff are clear about what to do if they have a concern about a pupil. Leaders act quickly on concerns raised and work with outside agencies and families to provide the support needed.

Pupils learn how to stay safe online. They are confident that if they have a worry, there is a trusted adult in school who will listen and act on this. Leaders monitor the systems in place for safeguarding to ensure these remain effective. As a result, there is a strong culture of safeguarding throughout the school.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, teachers are not clear about how to teach the curriculum effectively. This means that there is too much inconsistency in the delivery of the curriculum. Subject leaders need to clarify their pedagogical approach in some subjects to ensure teachers implement the curriculum consistently and support all pupils to achieve as well as they should in all subjects.

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](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	138737
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10256374
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy, Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	208
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Jacqueline Evans
Headteacher	David Rye
Website	www.west-malling.kent.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	17 October 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- This is a Church of England primary school within the Diocese of Rochester. It was last inspected under section 48 of the Education Act 2005 in March 2022. The next inspection will be within eight years of that last inspection.
- The school is part of The Tenax School Trust, a trust with eight primary schools and one secondary school in Kent and East Sussex.
- The school has a specialist resource provision for pupils with speech and language needs, with a capacity for 21 pupils. There are currently 16 pupils in the provision.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

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

- 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 their evaluation of the school.
- The inspectors met with the headteacher, other leaders, and a range of staff at the school. The inspectors met with the chief executive officer of the multi-academy trust. The inspectors also met with one trustee, the chair of governors and three members of the governing body. The inspectors spoke with a representative from the Diocese of Rochester.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, science, physical education and computing. For each deep dive, the inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The inspectors also considered the curriculum in other subjects.
- The inspectors reviewed a wide range of documents, including those related to the governance of the school.
- The inspectors considered the views of parents and carers through responses to Ofsted's Parent View survey. The inspectors spoke to staff, parents and pupils during the inspection and took account of the staff confidential online surveys.
- To inspect safeguarding, the inspectors met with the designated safeguarding lead and considered safeguarding documents and records. This included the school's records and plans for supporting pupils who have been referred to outside agencies.

Inspection team

Graham Chisnell, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Therese Winthe	Ofsted Inspector

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