

Wallands Community Primary School

Gundreda Road, Lewes, East Sussex BN7 1PU

Inspection dates

13–14 February 2019

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- The quality of teaching across the school is variable. In some classes, work does not match the needs of all pupils, including the most able. Consequently, they are not fully engaged in learning.
- Current pupils' progress is inconsistent across the school. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), disadvantaged pupils, boys and the most able achieve less well than their peers in some year groups.
- Leaders and governors do not evaluate the impact of their actions well enough. Consequently, pupils' outcomes are too slow to improve.
- Teaching and assessment in subjects other than English and mathematics are not yet fully developed. As a result, pupils do not make consistently good progress in a broad enough range of subjects.
- The proportion of pupils who are absent from school and the proportion of pupils excluded from school are above the national average.
- Children in the early years are happy and confident. However, some teaching does not support their learning well enough. As a result, children do not make as much progress as they should.
- Many middle leaders are inexperienced. They need further support to develop their roles.

The school has the following strengths

- Pupils with SEND who attend the language unit make strong progress. Adults know them well and ensure they receive effective support that is skilfully tailored to meet their individual needs.
- Well-planned teaching in the Nursery ensures that children become independent and confident learners.
- Pupils' conduct as they move around the school and at breaktimes is good. They are polite and respectful.
- Rigorous safeguarding arrangements ensure that pupils are well looked after. The school effectively supports pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Governors have an accurate view of the school. They support school leaders well and hold them to account effectively for many aspects of the school.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve progress and attainment for all groups of pupils, especially those with SEND, boys, the most able and disadvantaged pupils by:
 - improving the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, so that they are consistently good across the whole school, including in the early years
 - raising levels of challenge for the most able.
- Improve the quality of leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - senior leaders evaluate effectively the impact of actions taken to secure improvement
 - middle leaders are supported to develop their leadership skills further
 - leaders further develop the wider curriculum so that pupils progress well in subjects other than English and mathematics
 - governors hold leaders to account even more closely for the progress of groups of pupils.
- Improve pupils' behaviour by:
 - improving attendance, especially of disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND
 - further reducing levels of fixed-term exclusion
 - ensuring that work matches the needs of all pupils so that they are motivated and engaged in learning.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Since the last inspection standards have declined. Senior leaders have been too slow to secure the improvements required to ensure that pupils are able to achieve well. The support provided by the local authority and the partnership with Priory School have added capacity for leadership, leading to more recent improvement. However, this has not yet had a positive impact upon pupils' outcomes.
- Leaders have identified the strengths and weaknesses of the school and have taken a range of actions to improve the school. However, leaders do not have a sufficiently detailed understanding of pupils' attainment and progress. They have not analysed information about pupils' performance thoroughly enough, especially in relation to groups of pupils. Therefore, they are unable to evaluate effectively enough the impact that extra teaching and support have on improving pupils' outcomes.
- Leaders have raised the quality of teaching. They have provided effective advice and training which have helped teachers to improve their skills. However, the quality of teaching remains inconsistent across the school.
- Additional funding for disadvantaged pupils is not used effectively. Leaders do not focus spending on the specific needs of these pupils. As a result, disadvantaged pupils achieve less well than their peers, particularly in English and mathematics.
- The quality of middle leadership is variable. The majority of middle leaders are new to the role. They are beginning to monitor provision and analyse pupil outcomes. However, they do not rigorously evaluate the impact of teaching and the curriculum on improving pupils' progress.
- Leaders make sure that support and help for individual pupils in the main school with SEND are tailored well to their needs. However, these pupils are not achieving highly enough in all classes.
- Leadership of the language unit is highly effective. There are thorough monitoring and evaluation of the teaching and support for pupils with education, health and care (EHC) plans. This ensures that these pupils make strong progress.
- Leaders and governors have secured the commitment of all staff to improve the school. Staff value the professional development opportunities that they are given. These have enabled them to become more effective in their work.
- The curriculum is designed to build on pupils' prior knowledge and provides opportunities to refine their skills in a range of curriculum subjects. The implementation of the curriculum is in its infancy and it is too soon to evaluate the impact on developing pupils' knowledge and understanding in curriculum subjects other than English and mathematics. However, leaders' plans for improvement are well thought through.
- The additional funding for physical education (PE) and sport is used effectively to provide support for teachers to improve their skills and to improve pupils' confidence. Pupils engage positively in a range of sporting activities, including a winter sports day. They enjoy entering competitions with other schools locally.

- Pupils experience a wide range of activities which promote their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. For example, pupils developed their spiritual and moral understanding through a recent visit by parents from the Jewish community who spoke to them about the Holocaust. Pupils' social development is enhanced through residential trips which broaden their local horizons and develop their resilience. Consequently, pupils are being well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- Parents and carers who spoke to inspectors commented positively about the improvements made by the headteacher. They welcome the opportunity to be involved in activities related to their children's learning. For example, parents of pupils in Year 1 valued attending the assembly where children shared their work on 'Jim and the Beanstalk'.

Governance of the school

- Governors are committed to improving the school. They challenge leaders and seek further clarification before making decisions. However, they have not secured improvements quickly enough, particularly for pupils with SEND, disadvantaged pupils, boys and the most able.
- Governors have made sure that they have a good balance of skills and expertise. They have identified where their work could be strengthened and are actively recruiting new governors with specific competencies.
- Governors understand and fulfil their statutory duties well. Their financial and safeguarding checks are robust.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders ensure that all the required recruitment checks are carried out for staff and record these accurately. Governors' regular checks ensure that these records are compliant.
- Procedures in place for the protection of pupils are understood well by staff. Training ensures that staff have a good understanding of how to identify potential signs of abuse and neglect. They report concerns appropriately. All records relating to safeguarding are meticulously maintained.
- Pupils say that they feel safe. They talk knowledgeably about how to keep themselves safe when riding bicycles and when using the internet.
- Staff work closely with parents and other agencies to ensure that pupils are kept safe. Timely referrals for outside help are appropriately made when needed. The vast majority of parents agree that their children are happy and feel safe at school.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Since the previous inspection, substantial turbulence in staffing has hampered pupils' progress. Currently, there is a variability in the quality of teaching across the school. Improvements are emerging. Focused training and guidance are beginning to have a positive impact on improving the quality of teaching, especially at key stage 2 and

particularly in Year 6.

- Sometimes teachers do not check what pupils can do precisely enough. They do not plan work which is well matched to pupils' learning needs or which builds on their prior learning. As a result, teachers sometimes plan work that is either too hard or too easy and does not help pupils, especially the most able, to make strong progress. When pupils know what is expected of them, and work matches their needs, they are motivated and work hard.
- Teachers do not always check pupils' understanding carefully enough to address misconceptions. Consequently, time is not always used effectively in lessons.
- Typically, pupils learn to edit and improve their work. However, sometimes teachers do not address pupils' repeated mistakes. This hampers the progress that pupils make.
- In some lessons the pace of learning is slow and pupils lose focus on their work. This limits the progress that pupils make, especially those with SEND, boys, disadvantaged pupils and the most able. In lessons where there are established routines and adults have high expectations of pupils, there is a calm learning atmosphere and pupils are engaged in learning.
- In some lessons effective questioning by the class teacher supports pupils to develop their reasoning and analytical skills.
- Where pupils are given plenty of opportunities to practise writing for a variety of purposes they make secure progress. In Year 4, pupils enjoyed writing an advertisement to join the Roman army using historical facts to demonstrate their knowledge of this period in history.
- Pupils apply their literacy knowledge well across other subjects. For example, pupils in Year 6 were using the knowledge they had gained about creating suspense in their writing to compose music with atmosphere.
- Where teachers' subject knowledge is secure they teach with passion and enthusiasm. This motivates pupils, enabling them to develop secure understanding and improve their skills.
- A new approach to encouraging pupils to read for pleasure has raised their enthusiasm and motivation. Pupils in key stage 1 are beginning to decode words with increasing accuracy and understand the text they have read. The books that they read are carefully selected and appropriately match their phonic knowledge.
- Leaders appropriately deploy adults to support the complex needs of some pupils. A variety of extra teaching and support programmes are run by highly skilled adults. A wide range of external agencies support pupils with SEND. As a result, pupils' behavioural and emotional needs are effectively met.
- Pupils enjoy the recently introduced homework system as it enables them to have choice in their learning. The homework tasks promote pupils' independence. Pupils' positive engagement with homework supports their development.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils like school, feel safe and support each other well. They are polite and happy. They trust adults and engage well with them. They are proud of their school and say that it is 'amazing'.
- Pupils are kind and helpful. For example, older pupils welcome the responsibility they have to support younger pupils at lunchtime through the buddy system. These positive attitudes help to create a caring community ethos.
- The school values, including 'ready, respectful and safe', are central to the ethos of the school. Pupils demonstrate their understanding of them very well and say that they 'worship the values'. For example, the school council has introduced a trophy that is presented in assembly each week to the class best displaying the values.
- Relationships between pupils in the language unit are strong. Pupils support each other well. There are appropriate opportunities for pupils to join their peers within the main school for assembly, PE lessons and breaktime.
- Relationships between pupils are good. Instances of bullying, racist and other prejudicial behaviour are rare. Pupils are confident to speak to adults about any concerns they have and trust adults to respond swiftly.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- Over time, pupils' attendance has been consistently below the national average. Leaders communicate their expectations for pupils' attendance well. They have put in place a range of initiatives to increase attendance and issue fines when appropriate. Despite leaders' actions, attendance is not improving.
- Leaders have worked hard to improve the behaviour of pupils. As a result, the vast majority of pupils typically behave well. However, where teaching is weak, pupils do not engage sufficiently in their learning.
- In the playground and around school, pupils play well together and their conduct is good. They are effectively supervised. This, alongside high expectations, established routines and careful organisation of the environment, enables them to play safely.
- Leaders use exclusion according to the school's behaviour policy. In the past, levels of fixed-term and repeat exclusions have been above the national average. However, leaders use appropriate support for pupils with significant behavioural needs. As a result, exclusions are starting to reduce.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Since the last inspection, outcomes have declined due to variability in the quality of teaching. Leaders have started to address this. As a result, teaching is really strong in Year 6 but is variable in other year groups. Teaching overall is still not sufficiently effective to overturn the legacy of underachievement in key stage 2.
- Pupils' progress in writing at the end of key stage 2 has been well below the national averages for the past three years. The progress of disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND was particularly low compared to other pupils nationally.
- Currently, too many pupils in Years 3, 4 and 5, including those who are disadvantaged, continue to make insufficient progress in writing. However, pupils in Year 6 make strong progress due to the high-quality teaching in these classes. Nonetheless, the progress of disadvantaged pupils in Year 6 is still lagging behind that of their peers.
- The proportion of pupils who achieved the expected standard in mathematics in Year 6 2018 was significantly below the national average. Progress in mathematics was also very weak, including for disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND. Leaders have implemented a system in mathematics to ensure that work is more closely matched to the needs of pupils. Where this is used effectively, pupils are beginning to make the progress that is expected of them. However, this is not fully embedded across all classes.
- Standards in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of key stage 1 in 2018 were broadly in line with the national average. However, disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND did not achieve as well as other pupils nationally. Currently, most pupils in key stage 1, including those who are disadvantaged, are making the progress they should in English and mathematics. Some disadvantaged pupils are making strong progress. Consequently, the gap in attainment between them and their peers is beginning to close.
- Pupils enjoy reading. The development of their reading skills is well supported through teachers' use of carefully selected texts. The proportion of pupils in key stage 2 who achieved the expected and higher standards improved in 2018 to be in line with the national average. Currently, the majority of pupils in key stage 1 and 2 are making the progress expected of them in reading.
- Historically, boys have achieved less well than girls in key stages 1 and 2 in English and mathematics. The work in pupils' books and leaders' assessments show that this continues to be the case in most year groups.
- The progress of pupils with SEND is inconsistent. In some classes and subjects they are not making enough progress.
- Pupils in the language unit make strong progress. Staff know how pupils learn best and use this to inform planning to ensure that teaching meets their individual needs. Adults regularly check the pupils' understanding to ensure that they progress well with their learning.

Early years provision

Requires improvement

- Children enter the Reception Year with skills and abilities typical for their age. The

majority of children, particularly the most able, do not make sufficient progress during the year. Consequently, not enough children are ready for Year 1.

- Provision across the early years foundation stage is variable. The environment in which the children learn and the quality of teaching differs between the classes. This leads to inequality of opportunity for children. As a result, some children do not develop their skills as well as others.
- Leaders do not use systems for assessment well enough to analyse progress, particularly for groups of pupils. Leaders do not evaluate the impact of teaching and assessment precisely in order to secure improvements in pupils' outcomes.
- Children display high levels of engagement. This is because activities relate well to children's own experiences and are, therefore, meaningful. For example, the children were designing a climbing frame for the playground, which is currently undergoing redevelopment. This helped children develop their stamina and perseverance and enabled them to achieve results that they were justifiably pleased with.
- Children are safe and well looked after. Adults receive appropriate safeguarding training. They know the children well. This results in happy children who are excited to come to school.
- Strong, positive relationships exist between adults and children. Children behave well, are cooperative, praise each other and play harmoniously together.
- Adults effectively use questioning to check children's understanding. This enables them to challenge children to apply the skills that they have learned.
- Provision in the Nursery is well structured. Exciting opportunities for children to explore and be curious enable them to develop their skills across the different areas of learning and make links between them. For example, when learning about the number five in mathematics children were able to use their five fingers in their art work. As a result, they are well prepared for their move into the Reception Year.

School details

Unique reference number	114405
Local authority	East Sussex
Inspection number	10046057

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	386
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Noah Curthoys
Headteacher	Debbie Collis
Telephone number	01273 472776
Website	http://wallandsschool.org/
Email address	head@wallandscp.e-sussex.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	1–2 October 2014

Information about this school

- Since the previous inspection a new headteacher has been appointed and a new chair of governors is in post. A formal partnership exists between Wallands Community Primary School and Priory School. The headteacher of Priory School is the executive headteacher of the partnership.
- The school is much larger than the average-sized primary school.
- There is one Nursery class. Some of these children move on to Reception and the school draws the rest of its intake from a number of independent nursery providers.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage, with a very small minority from a range of other ethnic backgrounds. Very few pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND support is below the national average
- The proportion of pupils supported by an education, health and care plan is well above the national average.

- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is below the national average
- The school provides a speech and language unit for 16 primary-aged pupils from across East Sussex. All these pupils have statements for specific speech and language needs which cannot be met in mainstream schools.
- The school runs a breakfast club.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in all year groups, the Nursery and the language unit. Some of the observations were carried out jointly with the headteacher and the deputy headteacher.
- Inspectors met with pupils, heard a selection of pupils read and observed pupils in the breakfast club, at breaktimes and at lunchtimes. Inspectors also visited assembly.
- Inspectors met with the executive headteacher, headteacher, deputy headteacher, the leader of SEND, the early years leader, the leader of the language unit, leaders with subject responsibilities and a group of staff.
- The lead inspector met with members of the governing body. The lead inspector also met with a representative from the local authority.
- A range of pupils' books from all year groups and a range of subjects were looked at.
- Several documents were considered. Inspectors also considered information about pupils' progress, the use of additional funding, behaviour, attendance and safety.
- Inspectors took account of 161 responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire, Parent View, and spoke to parents before school. There were no responses to Ofsted's online pupils' questionnaire. Inspectors considered the comments made in 155 free-text responses. Inspectors reviewed the 37 responses to Ofsted's online staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Linda Taylor, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Ross Macdonald	Ofsted Inspector
Kirstine Boon	Ofsted Inspector

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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. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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