

Luddenham School

Luddenham, Faversham, Kent ME13 0TE

Inspection dates

26 to 27 February 2019

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Senior leaders are ambitious and have created a strong culture of improvement across the school.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is effective. Pupils are supported to build key skills, knowledge and understanding both in class and through specialist activities. As a result, they make good progress from their starting points.
- Children make a good start to their learning in the early years. They learn how to be safe and have very positive relationships with both one another and adults. Leaders in the early years have formed a strong team and now have a clear understanding of what children need to do to improve.
- Pupils' health and well-being is nurtured well. The sports premium funding is used to provide a wide range of sporting activities. The pupil premium funding is used effectively to support a range of therapeutic activities.
- Pupils' behaviour is resoundingly positive both in class and around the school. They are courteous of adults and caring of one another.
- Teaching has strengthened quickly. Questioning is used well to encourage pupils to think about their reasoning in mathematics, helping them to build secure knowledge and understanding.
- The curriculum captures pupils' imagination across a wide range of subjects. Opportunities to write across the curriculum help pupils practise writing skills. However, progress in the wider curriculum is not yet consistent in some year groups.
- Pupils are keen to be in school, and they attend school regularly. The school has a range of highly effective systems to encourage positive attendance. Pupils feel safe, and they enjoy being in school.
- Outcomes are strengthening across the school. Pupils read well and apply the skills they have learned in writing and mathematics across the curriculum. However, the progress of the most-able pupils is not yet consistently strong.
- Governors undertake their responsibilities conscientiously. They support improvements that leaders make. However, their checks do not yet consistently hold school leaders to account.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Strengthen the progress of pupils, including the most able, from their starting points across subjects by:
 - identifying how pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding will build progressively
 - ensuring that middle leaders regularly review pupils' progress in a wide range of subjects.
- Further strengthen the checks governors make to hold school leaders to account:
 - ensuring that records of governors' monitoring visits are evaluative
 - ensuring that there are procedures in place to monitor the single central record
 - ensuring that there are robust checks in place to maintain the statutory requirements for the school website.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Senior leaders are a strong team. They have built a culture of improvement since joining the school. They have a clear vision of what the school needs to do to improve, and they check the impact of their actions regularly. As a result, there is a strong culture of improvement across the school.
- Teachers and teaching assistants value the training they receive. Training and mentoring by experienced staff within the school support teachers in the early stages of their career to develop. Teaching assistants are trained to provide specialist support for pupils with SEND. Mentoring helps middle leaders to develop their skills in leadership. This has improved the quality of teaching across the school.
- The provision for pupils with SEND is effective. The special educational needs coordinator has a clear understanding of the needs of these pupils. Teachers help pupils develop key skills and knowledge to support their learning very well.
- Middle leaders are enthusiastic about the subjects they lead. They are keen to develop their own leadership skills, and they value the training that they receive. While their skills are developing, they do not yet check that the quality of provision and outcomes for pupils are strong in every subject.
- Leaders have created an engaging, thematic curriculum that covers a broad range of subjects. Pupils engage in activities beyond the school, including visits to the school's 'forest school', to the local gym and to the swimming pool. Specialist teachers deliver lessons in music and sporting activities. However, the changes are not yet embedded, and subject leaders are not yet clear about the coverage of all subjects in each year group.
- English and mathematics leaders are effective. Leaders carry out a wide range of checks to ensure that assessments are accurate and pupils make good progress. Pupils experience opportunities to use core skills in reading, writing and mathematics across a wide range of subjects. There is a clear chronology of learning in reading, writing and mathematics in pupils' books that has led to strengthening outcomes across the school.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well. Leaders promote the school values of fairness, leadership, imagination, grit, honesty and teamwork and ensure that these are embedded across the curriculum. Pupils are also taught about the importance of British values. In one lesson, pupils produced a poster that helped them think about democracy and the rule of law. Pupils uphold these values, show a genuine care for one another and respect the views of others. This prepares them well for life in modern Britain.
- Parents are confident in the leadership of the school. The comment, 'The headteacher is fantastic, driving up standards and building an amazing, enthusiastic and professional staff,' was reflective of the views of many parents.

Governance of the school

- Governors are ambitious for the school and ensure that they support the improvements planned by school leaders. Governors have invited middle leaders to present at governing body meetings, asking challenging and pertinent questions. Governors have structured the agenda of meetings, supported by a new clerk to the governing body, to ensure that discussions focus more deeply on outcomes for pupils. They have collaborated with a governing body in another school and are starting to develop systems to share practice in governance across schools. This has strengthened governance in the school.
- Governors regularly monitor the quality of provision at the school. They undertake termly monitoring visits that are linked to the school's plan for improvement. However, monitoring reports are too descriptive. Some statutory areas of compliance, including the school website and the school's records for staff and volunteers, are not checked well enough. This has led to some inconsistency between policy documents published on the school website and those approved by the governing body.
- Governors work closely with school leaders to ensure that pupils are safe. Safeguarding training has enabled governors to effectively monitor the policy and procedures in place to keep children safe.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- School leaders ensure that concerns about pupils are diligently followed through. Staff receive appropriate training and are clear about the systems in place to keep pupils safe. Accurate records are maintained for all adults working in the school, and school leaders make sure that all the required recruitment checks are carried out.
- Pupils, parents and staff say that pupils feel safe. The computing curriculum helps pupils think about the risks of being online. The school website has useful information for pupils and parents about online safety. Pupils are confident that they can talk to a trusted adult if they have a concern about staying safe.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teachers have strong subject knowledge. Lessons are planned well and provide opportunities for pupils to check their understanding and develop their thinking. Teaching assistants support less-able pupils and pupils with SEND to secure their confidence and understanding across many subjects.
- Teachers pose challenging questions in mathematics lessons. Pupils are encouraged to think about their reasoning in mathematics and are asked to explain their thinking. This helps pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, to embed their knowledge and become increasingly capable mathematicians.
- Pupils develop the capacity to learn from their mistakes. Teachers provide valuable feedback in books, in line with the school's policy, that helps pupils reflect on their own

learning. Pupils value the feedback given and use this to improve their work across a wide range of subjects.

- The provision for pupils with SEND is effective. The school provides a range of provision groups for pupils. In these groups, pupils are highly motivated to learn because of energetic and purposeful teaching by both teachers and teaching assistants. This ensures that pupils' core skills in reading, writing and mathematics are developed well.
- Teachers' assessment of writing supports the development of pupils' skills. Teachers produce helpful feedback to pupils about how they can improve their writing. Teachers work with other schools to moderate their assessments. Pupils write well across many subjects in both key stage 1 and key stage 2.
- In key stage 1, teachers provide a breadth of opportunities to develop skills, knowledge and understanding across the curriculum. Pupils are duly proud of the work they produce in lessons. Lessons challenge pupils to think deeply about spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding. An example of this was seen in a year 1 religious education lesson, where pupils enjoyed discussing the key features of a Christian wedding ceremony. As a result, work in books over time shows a variety of skills developed across many subjects.
- In key stage 2, pupils enjoy the wider curriculum. Work is varied across a range of topics. However, teachers do not ensure that pupils' skills build on what they know and can do across the wider range of subjects. There is limited evidence of pupils' progress in some subjects, including design technology and art. The quantity and chronology of work produced in some year groups is not consistently strong across key stage 2. Work in topic books often has similar levels of challenge for pupils, including those with higher starting points. As a result, the most able pupils are not consistently challenged across all subjects.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Pupils value their education and are keen to attend. Attendance is above national figures and persistent absence is rare. Pupils are enthusiastic about school and have excellent attitudes to learning.
- Pupils show confidence in their learning. They relish discussions and debate in a considered way because of the positive climate created in class. They are attentive and curious in lessons and enjoy being challenged.
- Pupils' well-being is strong. They are given an engaging range of opportunities to keep healthy through a variety of clubs and the 'daily mile' challenge. Vulnerable pupils receive a range of therapeutic provisions to support their social, emotional and mental health needs. This encourages pupils to feel secure, be active and relish the sporting opportunities on offer.
- Pupils feel safe. They have very strong relationships with adults in school and think the behaviour of other pupils is strong. One pupil, reflecting the views of many, said, 'This

is a kind school.' Pupils are confident that they can confide in adults and can trust them to resolve any concern they raise.

- Pupils have an excellent understanding of how to stay safe. They can explain how to stay safe online and are aware of what to do if they are worried about feeling safe in school or at home. They are caring and attentive of one another when at play, and the older pupils have a genuine desire to look after younger pupils.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Pupils behave well in lessons. They enjoy the company of one another and show respect when speaking to one another and to adults. As a result, pupils are self-disciplined, and incidents of low-level disruption are extremely rare.
- Pupils' conduct around school is exemplary. They are courteous to one another and to adults. They show a respect for the views of others and incidents of misbehaviour are rare. They are compassionate, and they ensure that no pupil is left out while at play.
- Pupils, staff and parents are resoundingly positive about the behaviour of pupils. Pupils show a pride in their school. Staff create a culture of praise, and pupils model this with one another. These high expectations for behaviour are shown by pupils across the school in lessons and when at play.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- The percentage of pupils achieving the expected standard in reading, writing and maths has risen over the past three years and is now above the national average. Pupils acquire skills, knowledge and understanding well and apply these across the curriculum. They are well prepared for secondary school.
- Pupils read confidently. In the Year 1 phonics check, attainment is above the national average. By the end of key stage 1, pupils use phonics skills confidently to help them read. By the end of key stage 2, pupils have a passion for reading and can describe a range of grammatical features within the books they read. As a result, pupils read confidently and apply their reading skills well across the curriculum.
- Disadvantaged pupils make good progress from their starting points in a wide range of subjects. They are supported well to overcome their barriers to learning through a wide range of opportunities across the curriculum. By the end of key stage 2, disadvantaged pupils make strong progress in reading and writing. Currently, not enough disadvantaged pupils progress well in mathematics.
- The most able pupils do not always make strong progress. Progress is less strong for high prior-attaining pupils in writing and mathematics by the end of key stage 2. The level of challenge in topic books across key stage 2 for the most able pupils is inconsistent. School leaders are aware of this and are working hard to ensure that the most able pupils make stronger progress in writing and mathematics across key stage 2.
- Progress for pupils across key stage 1 is good. Historically, by the end of key stage 1, attainment has been below average for the most able pupils in reading, writing and

mathematics. Because of the strengthening quality of teaching, work in books shows that the most able pupils are challenged by teachers to produce ever increasingly complex work. As a result, pupils are now challenging themselves to achieve more.

- Pupils with SEND make good progress from their starting points. Work in books shows that pupils progress well, embedding knowledge over time and across many subjects.
- Pupils achieve well in science. They enjoy practical activities and develop skills that they have learned in writing and mathematics to support their learning. As a result, outcomes in science by end of key stage 2 are strong, and pupils produce work that shows a clear development of scientific knowledge and enquiry skills.

Early years provision

Good

- Leaders in the early years are effective. The newly appointed early years teacher works well with the established teacher. The new team has brought a vibrancy to the early years and have introduced structures to the curriculum that have improved the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. These contribute to the high engagement of children in learning both inside and outside the classroom.
- Children enjoy learning in the early years. Teachers create stimulating learning opportunities both inside and outside the classroom. Children thrive on the activities they undertake, enjoying the challenge created by the teachers. One child explained articulately, 'My favourite dinosaur is the T Rex because he could stomp and roar,' showing a delight in learning and a confident use of descriptive language.
- Children develop strong phonics skills in the early years. They are taught phonics well and enjoy sharing books with adults. This helps them to use phonics skills to read simple words, and also to develop a love of books.
- Children have good behaviours for learning. They move sensibly between activities inside and outside of the classroom. They work confidently with one another in pairs and groups. This leads to effective learning outcomes for children across a wide range of areas.
- Leaders in the early years ensure that children learn how to be safe. Adults speak with children about how to stay safe. Activities are crafted to give children opportunities to learn about managing risk. Staff have appropriate training and are aware of procedures that are in place to report any safeguarding concerns.
- Parents are complimentary about the provision for their child. Parents appreciate the digital assessment system used by the school and use this to share learning at home and at school. They are confident in the new early years team and recognise that while early years staffing has been unstable in the past, changes have led to strengthening outcomes for children in the early years.
- Children in the early years make good progress from their starting points. Children arrive at school broadly in line with age-related expectations and leave early years ready for the next stage in their learning. Work in books shows the development of children's writing and high expectations in number and shape understanding. Children can articulate their understanding and have confidence in the adults who support them. This is leading to strengthening outcomes for children over time.

School details

Unique reference number	138034
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10054134

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 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	199
Appropriate authority	The board of trustees
Chair	Dominic Deeson
Headteacher	Keeley Wilson
Telephone number	01795 532 061
Website	www.luddenham.kent.sch.uk
Email address	headteacher@luddenham.kent.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	25 to 26 February 2014

Information about this school

- Luddenham School is an average-sized school, slightly below the national average for primary schools.
- The school converted to become an academy in April 2012 as a single academy.
- The headteacher has been in post since the previous Section 8 inspection. The academy is supported by a board of five members and a governing body. The chair of the governing body is also a member.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is lower than the national average. The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is lower than the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is lower than the national average.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 20 lessons, including 9 jointly with senior leaders and one assembly.
- Inspectors talked to pupils in lessons, at breaktimes and with a group of pupils in a formal meeting.
- Inspectors held meetings with senior leaders, middle leaders and governors.
- Inspectors carried out a scrutiny of pupils' work with school leaders.
- Inspectors looked at a wide range of documents, including: the school's own assessment information; the school's self-evaluation and plan for improvement; policies; minutes of the governing body, members' meetings and governor monitoring records; teaching and learning monitoring records; and records relating to pupils' attendance, behaviour and safeguarding.
- The lead inspector scrutinised the school website and single central record.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read.
- The views of 42 parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including 21 free-text responses, were considered. The views of 45 pupils who responded to the Ofsted's pupils' questionnaire were considered. The views of 19 staff were taken into account through Ofsted's staff survey.

Inspection team

Graham Chisnell, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Margaret Warner	Ofsted Inspector

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Manchester
M1 2WD

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