

Wayfield Primary School

Wayfield Road, Chatham, Kent ME5 0HH

Inspection dates

10–11 May 2016

Overall effectiveness

Inadequate

Effectiveness of leadership and management	Inadequate
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Inadequate
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Inadequate
Outcomes for pupils	Inadequate
Early years provision	Inadequate
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an inadequate school

- The school operates its safeguarding and child protection procedures badly. Pupils' safety and well-being are at risk.
- Staff manage pupils' behaviour poorly. Normal discipline has broken down. On occasion, staff lose control of pupils, who are then at risk of being harmed.
- Too often, pupils become distracted, fool about or are noisy in lessons. Their learning suffers.
- Over the past two years, the school's provision has notably worsened. Pupils' attainment and progress have fallen catastrophically. Pupils underachieve in all key stages.
- Pupils are inadequately taught. Staff expect too little of them.
- Pupils' reading, writing and mathematics are below the standard that they should be.
- The results of the 2015 national tests were very low at all stages.
- The leadership and management of the school are weak at all levels. The headteacher is the only senior leader. He works hard but cannot do all that is needed by himself.
- The school development plan is ineffective in bringing improvement. The school evaluates itself too highly.
- The Griffin Schools Trust oversees the school unsuccessfully. It provides much support but this has not prevented the school's failure.
- The governance arrangements, organised by the academy trust, are ineffective.
- The school curriculum is broad but insufficiently challenging for pupils.
- Pupils are not as happy in their school as they should be.
- Many parents are rightly very concerned about the school.
- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development ineffectively.

The school has the following strengths

- There is stronger teaching and behaviour management in the early years and Years 5 and 6.
- Pupils enjoy the wide range of clubs and extra-curricular activities available to them.
- The headteacher relates well and encouragingly to staff, pupils and parents.
- The leaders for special educational needs, physical education and early years do some useful work.

Full report

In accordance with the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure most urgently that pupils are not at risk: that they are kept safe and feel happy and safe. The school's existing procedures for safeguarding and risk assessment must be checked and managed, correctly and carefully at all times, by the relevant academy trust and every member of staff, in accordance with guidance and all requirements, without any default whatsoever.
- Improve pupils' behaviour, also as a matter of utmost urgency, so that it is not aggressive, dangerous, unkind, silly or unduly noisy anywhere in the school, or during any school activities, and that pupils can always learn without distraction or disruption.
- Improve teaching and the progress made by pupils, in particular by:
 - expecting much more of the pupils
 - assessing pupils' work and learning accurately and setting them work which meets their needs
 - ensuring pupils present their work neatly and with pride
 - managing pupils' behaviour in lessons properly.
- Improve considerably the leadership, management and governance of the school by:
 - ensuring that there is sufficient capacity in the school's senior leadership to manage the very important work needing to be done
 - evaluating the school accurately and robustly
 - being quite clear what improvements are planned, who is responsible for them, and how the improvements will be monitored and evaluated
 - establishing and improving considerably middle leadership, including that for all subjects, so that the curriculum is more challenging to pupils and has greater depth
 - improving governance considerably, so that school leaders are fully challenged and supported in improving the school and that the impact of their actions, and of any support provided to the school, is robustly evaluated
 - involving and engaging parents much better, taking closer account of their views and any complaints and concerns.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is inadequate

- The headteacher has recently taken over full-time responsibility after the departure of the previous head of school. He works very hard and is a popular figure. However, he has too much to do and spends far too much of his time 'firefighting' and troubleshooting relatively minor issues. During the inspection, he spent a considerable time invigilating the Year 6 national tests in English, checked on at one point by the local chair of governors. He is not able, therefore, to lead the school strategically and begin to sort out its many problems. The school does not promote an ambitious culture.
- There are no other senior leaders. The assistant headteacher's leadership role is underdeveloped as she has been focusing on her role as Year 6 class teacher. As a result, her time to lead English is limited and has had insufficient impact. The headteacher is the subject leader for mathematics and also does not have the time to carry out this role effectively.
- The school's middle leadership is very weak. Most subjects have no leader and are not well organised or managed. This leads to a tired and undemanding curriculum. All subjects are taught and many of the topics have interesting themes. But expectations of the pupils in them are too low.
- The school has not established strong relations with many of its parents. Parental attendance at open evenings is low. Many parents are very critical of the school. Although the headteacher and staff, including the very welcoming administrative staff, are generally open and receptive to parents, the school has not responded to these serious criticisms adequately.
- The Griffin Schools Trust recognises that it has not been successful in gaining the necessary support of parents and the local community. It has worked with the regional schools commissioner to agree to pass the school to another academy trust in the autumn. The two trusts have established transition arrangements. The new trust intends to add immediately to the school's leadership capacity. It is correct in this aim.
- The school's website does not include all of the information that it should. A number of parts of the website were out of date at the time of the inspection.
- The school develops pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development weakly. It does not apply enough specific attention to this. The same applies to developing pupils' understanding of fundamental British values, such as democracy and tolerance, which also have a low profile.
- The school does not evaluate itself firmly. It does not suitably analyse evidence about its performance. The academy trust hopes the school is doing better than it actually is. It particularly highlights any perceived improvements, or 'green shoots', even though these are small.
- The performance management of staff, although organised correctly in the right timescales, is ineffective. It does not ensure good teaching and provision for pupils. The school does not have the leadership capacity to develop teaching well, or provide the necessary level of supervision and coaching for staff.
- The school improvement plan is unsuccessful in driving the rapid improvement needed. It includes many useful areas of work, such as improving teaching, pupils' safeguarding and relations with parents. However, its targets or milestones are vague. They are not precise enough about what success in these areas should be like. Nor does the school have the capacity to do much of what is in the plan effectively.
- The academy trust has not been able to recruit or retain suitable school leaders or teachers in sufficient numbers. There has been a high turnover of staff. Recently, there has been less turbulence among teaching staff.
- Pupil premium funding is spent on appropriate things. However, the school and academy trust do not check or analyse the impact of this expenditure suitably. The disadvantaged pupils concerned do not fare as well as they should.
- The local authority safeguarding team has found it difficult to work successfully with the school.
- The very new special educational needs coordinator has started to identify useful work that needs to be done for the pupils for whom she is responsible. She has made a positive early start.
- The physical education subject leader is good at her job. She ensures that pupils take part in many worthwhile physical activities, including sports matches with other schools. The school spends its sports premium funding suitably. This has effectively raised the profile of sport and fitness among the pupils.
- The school is strongly recommended not to appoint newly qualified teachers.
- **The governance of the school**
 - The school's local governing body is shared with three other academies in Medway. Although the chair

of this body works hard, as do other governors, they are not successful in addressing sufficiently the specific needs of Wayfield Primary School. The local governing body has not been able satisfactorily to deal with matters such as weak teaching and poor behaviour, or the academic performance of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils.

- The legal governance of the school is provided by the multi-academy trust. It has a system of different boards to check on the work of the school. Members of these boards are aware of many of the school’s weaknesses, but underestimate the depth of the problems. The trust does not ensure that the school has the leadership it needs. It provides significant levels of support to the school. But this is not usually successful; the school does not have the capacity to receive or use that support effectively. The trust’s support for the school has not made the necessary impact on standards. The trust has not developed a suitable working partnership with many parents, which it recognises. It has not been able to respond productively to parents’ understandable concerns.
- Ultimately, the Griffin Schools Trust has failed to ensure that the pupils receive a suitable education or that they are kept safe.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective. The school has suitable written procedures for safeguarding the pupils and child protection. However, the school does not manage, apply or follow these procedures properly. For this reason, children are at risk, as some parents have rightly noted. The school does not share information as it should internally or with external partners. Its record-keeping of child protection matters is uncoordinated and sloppy. Where actions are needed, these are not routinely checked on or recorded. The school does not assess risk properly. School leadership does not always know whether risk assessments are being done or not for particular activities. School leaders, governors and the academy trust do not ensure that risk assessments are checked or signed off properly. Indeed, the school could not find many of its risk assessments when inspectors asked to see them. Those that inspectors did see missed out some obvious risks and were unfit for purpose. The school site is generally kept secure during the school day, largely due to valuable work by the site manager. Nevertheless, inspectors did note an outside classroom door left open and unsupervised for several minutes at the start of a school day. This gave free access to the main building. The school explained this by the fact that it was raining and the teacher had to be somewhere else to collect the class. The school administrative team maintains the required single central record of checks on staff and other adults working in the school correctly. Staff receive regular training in pupil safeguarding. Until very recently, the school has not had its own on-site designated child protection coordinator. It has just trained and appointed a member of staff to this role.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is inadequate

- Teaching does not usually meet the needs of the pupils. Pupils learn at much too slow a rate.
- Generally, staff expect much too little of the pupils. Lessons are unchallenging, or lack clear purpose, and so the standards of pupils’ work are low. However, occasionally the opposite happens and the work given to pupils is too difficult. This is because staff do not use assessments to set work at the right level for the pupils.
- Teachers tolerate misbehaviour by pupils, which is often serious, much too readily. They do not always address aggressive behaviour. Teachers continue to talk to classes when pupils are noisy or silly, so pupils do not always hear them. Quite often, teachers pose interesting questions and make helpful comments to their classes, but these are insufficiently heard by pupils.
- In a lesson about multiplication and division, most pupils really struggled because the work in their groups was too difficult for them. The teacher did not adjust this work, nor deal with pupils who were fighting in the corner of the classroom.
- When teachers do confront poor behaviour, the sanctions often involve pupils sitting in a corner or being sent out of the room. This means that pupils miss the lessons and can be left unsupervised.
- The teaching of phonics (linking letters and sounds), generally in small groups, is inconsistent and often weak. Staff have been trained in this but the school does not adequately check on the quality of the lessons. Staff do not always insist on work being properly completed or check that the pupils have learned what they need to. The letter sounds are not always clearly articulated by adults. Pupils’ behaviour is not well managed.
- The teaching of literacy skills is weak and undemanding. Pupils take reading books home inconsistently and the records of their reading are not consistently kept.

- Teaching is at its best in the early years and in Years 5 and 6. Teachers' expectations are higher and better established in these year groups. In Year 6, pupils' work is well assessed, so work is set at the right levels for what the pupils need. These pupils have made some clear progress this year, from low starting points. In a Year 5 lesson, many pupils learned appropriately how to convert proper fractions to improper fractions. This work was not as demanding as might usually be expected for pupils of this age, but it was broadly right for needs of the class. There was not enough challenge for higher-attaining pupils. The teacher demonstrated a positive manner and managed pupils' behaviour effectively.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

is inadequate

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is inadequate.
- Pupils have mixed feelings about the school and how well they are looked after. They do not consistently feel safe. Their physical and emotional well-being is weakly promoted. Pupils are not properly encouraged to show respect to each other. They are not always confident in the school's ability to resolve any problems. One said 'the school needs cameras to see misbehaviour'.
- Pupils who met with inspectors were very clear about these matters. They said there is 'bullying and lots of arguments'. One said: 'We just want everyone to be friends but people often disagree.' Another commented that pupils 'wind each other up and have lots of fights'. Pupils agreed that, when there are problems, they are not always good at staying away from each other while things calm down.
- Pupils know and recognise the school's values. But the sensible aspirations the values contain are not well applied by staff, so pupils do not consistently follow them. Pupils pointed out also the worthlessness of the school's 'SLANT' mnemonic which reminds pupils how to sit on chairs safely. They concurred that many pupils 'just don't follow it'.
- The inspection evidence supports the comments from pupils. It also upholds the clear dissatisfaction of many parents. Most parents who responded to the Parent View questionnaire say their children feel unsafe at school and that the school does not deal with bullying well. The school's own bullying records are inconsistently kept and organised, without sufficient analysis.
- Inspectors observed examples of pupils coming in from playtimes, upset and tearful. These pupils were left alone by staff. When inspectors asked them what was wrong, they said it was bullying, name-calling or rough behaviour by other pupils. They said that the staff do not stop this behaviour: 'The staff tell them off but it doesn't stop, ever.' This is a frequent concern of parents and pupils.
- Some pupils helpfully take responsibility in the school, for example by sweeping up the hall at lunchtime and through membership of the school council.
- The local Anglican church leads weekly assemblies. These are valuable in explaining spiritual and moral themes to the pupils. They are lively and engaging; consequently, pupils listened and watched with interest during the assembly observed by inspectors. However, pupils were noisy when entering and leaving the hall.
- Pupils are taught how to keep safe on the internet and on roads. Those who spoke with inspectors feel reasonably confident about this.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is inadequate. Many parents, pupils and some staff express strong concerns about bullying and bad behaviour in the school. They are right to do so. The school has low expectations of pupils' behaviour. It does not record or analyse behaviour concerns suitably. The school neglects to encourage good behaviour by pupils and often fails to control their subsequent poor behaviour.
- The level of discipline normally and reasonably expected in a primary school has broken down.
- Mainly this shows itself in mischievous and disruptive behaviour by pupils in lessons, which staff generally allow. Pupils frequently call out, make silly noises, talk incessantly while the teacher is talking, fidget and swing on their chairs. In one case observed by an inspector, a pupil hit his head doing this. When pupils are set work individually or in groups, time is often wasted as they do not settle well and they talk about other things. At times, some revel in the loose discipline and the chance to fool about. However, they do not always like it. The frequent disruption means that their learning proceeds slowly. Pupils cannot concentrate.

- Sometimes, however, the misbehaviour is more serious still and becomes dangerous. This can be in lessons or around the school. Staff accept this behaviour. Inspectors observed some unpleasant instances of unchecked misbehaviour by pupils. In one lesson in an infant class, some pupils continuously threw items on their tables at other pupils, with one pupil being hit and hurt in the face. In another unsafe and chaotic situation, younger pupils misbehaved dangerously in the lunch hall by fighting, bashing into each other and the wall and throwing themselves across and along dinner tables. In these situations, inspectors had to intervene directly to protect the children. Although staff were present, they neither dealt with the misbehaviour nor appeared to notice it.
- In the early years, and in Years 5 and 6, pupil misbehaviour is far less prevalent, because the staff in these year groups have successfully established higher expectations.
- Pupils are often noisy and unruly as they move around the school. This includes when they are being directly supervised by staff.
- Pupils' presentation of their work, including that on display, is too often untidy. The school's expectations of this are low.
- The school formally excludes a very high number of pupils. This is a recent development. Most of these pupils are infants. The school records exclusions correctly but does not analyse them to learn any lessons, particularly about how to reduce the exclusions.
- Pupils' attendance is below average. The school could not provide data for the previous school year for comparison. Staff have begun to put some measures in place to improve attendance but there is no significant evidence available of the impact of this.
- Pupils who spoke with inspectors were friendly and polite. They are normal, nice children, with hopes for their futures. They were just rather wistful at times, wishing for something better in their school.

Outcomes for pupils

are inadequate

- Outcomes for pupils have plummeted. In 2015, pupils' results in national assessments in every key stage were very low. Pupils' attainment in English and mathematics remains low across all year groups from Year 1 upwards. Pupils underperform considerably. Generally, boys fare even less well than girls.
- A very high proportion of pupils across the school have not made the expected progress in English and mathematics this year, much as last year. There is considerable underachievement. The school is insufficiently aware of this and has not acted to deal with it.
- Standards in the pupils' writing seen by inspectors are below expectations in all year groups. Pupils often make incorrect use of grammar; spelling is often poor. Their range of vocabulary is limited. In some cases, nevertheless, the content of the writing shows imagination and fitness for its purpose.
- Pupils' mathematical work across the school is at too low a level.
- Only one in five pupils in Year 1 in 2015 were successful in the phonics screening; this is exceptionally low. There remain clear weaknesses in pupils' grasp of phonics in the current Year 1 and Year 2 cohorts. The school is nevertheless hopeful of some improvement in the screening results this year.
- For Years 2 and 6 in 2015, the national test outcomes in English and mathematics were low and had declined from previous years. Too few pupils by the end of Year 6 made the progress they should have.
- The pupils who read to inspectors showed interest and enjoyment in their books. However, their reading lacked the fluency and accuracy expected for pupils of their ages. Pupils knew individual letter sounds, and tried hard, but often found it hard to blend these into the words. Overall, the attainment in reading shown is too low. Some pupils showed sound comprehension skills. Pupils' reading records did not consistently indicate high levels of reading at home or school.
- Too few pupils reach high or above-average standards in their work. Those with particular abilities or aptitudes are not well catered for.
- Disadvantaged pupils entitled to pupil premium funding in Years 4 to 6 fare no worse than their classmates in English and mathematics. In Years 1 to 3 they achieve even less well than the others. In all cases, pupils entitled to the pupil premium achieve well below national expectations.
- Pupils with special educational needs or disability make progress in line with that of the other pupils in the early years and in Years 3 to 5. In Years 1, 2 and 6, they perform less well.
- The school has very scant information about how well pupils are doing in the subjects beyond English and mathematics. There is little evidence to be seen of any high attainment in these subjects. Pupils are not fully prepared for life in diverse modern Britain.

- As they progress through the school, pupils are not well prepared for the next stages of their education or for secondary school.

Early years provision

is inadequate

- Early years provision is inadequate because of the school-wide weakness in managing safeguarding and child protection concerns. These serious faults apply to the early years as much as the other year groups. This means that children may not be protected as they should be.
- Other than this, however, the early years provision has some strengths and is improving. On a day-to-day level, the children in the early years classes are kept safe. They are well looked after and supervised by the adults. Their behaviour is positive.
- In 2015, only one in 10 children reached a good level of development at the end of the Reception Year. This is exceptionally low. The children were very poorly prepared to enter Year 1.
- The early years are under different leadership in this school year. The new leader has established some clear and sensible priorities. These have started to make some positive difference. The school reasonably expects improvement in the good level of development figure this year. Many children have made reasonable progress from their starting points. More Reception children are now achieving age-related expectations, though higher outcomes remain possible.
- The early years is in three sections: for two-year-olds, Nursery and Reception. These sections generally operate independently of each other. This means that the provision as a whole is not as coherently organised and dovetailed together as it could be.
- The provision for two-year-olds is very good. It meets the children's needs closely. High-quality activities are planned for each child every day, which are supported well by the adults. Each child's progress is monitored and tracked closely, with appropriate moderation. Children learn to be increasingly independent and curious. They are happy. The provision promotes their personal, social and emotional development well.
- In the Nursery class for three- and four-year-olds, children enjoy engaging activities across all the required areas of learning. They make choices and pursue their interests happily, developing aptitudes such as concentration and independence well. Adults help their learning and thinking by asking some good questions. However, the assessments of pupils and planning of learning activity are not as sharp as they could be. Some activities, therefore, are not precisely enough focused on the children's particular needs.
- In the Reception class, the teacher has placed great emphasis on developing children's literacy and numeracy skills. This is valuable but has led to an underemphasis on the other aspects of the early years curriculum. Reception children are assessed accurately.
- Across the early years, the indoor and outdoor learning areas are attractive, well organised and resourced. Children can often organise equipment for themselves. In the Reception class, the lovely outdoor area is underused.
- Pupil premium funding is spent appropriately and the children concerned achieve as well as others.
- There is scope to improve the school's work with partners and other agencies. There are generally positive relationships with parents, though parents are not much involved in contributing to assessments made of their children.

School details

Unique reference number	140313
Local authority	Medway
Inspection number	10017459

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsored
Age range of pupils	2–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	230
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jennie Thomas
Headteacher	Michael O’Grady
Telephone number	0300 065 8230
Website	www.wayfield.medway.sch.uk
Email address	office@wayfield.medway.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- This is an average-sized primary school, serving a locality in south Chatham. It has part-time nursery provision for two- to four-year-olds.
- The school converted to become an academy in November 2013. Earlier that year, its predecessor school was inspected and was judged to be good.
- Wayfield Primary School is part of the Griffin Schools Trust academy chain. It is due to leave this chain to join another, local, multi-academy trust from September 2016.
- The school does not meet the floor standards. These are the government’s minimum expectations for pupils’ attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- There is a children’s centre on the same site as the school.
- Many more pupils than the average are entitled to the support of pupil premium funding.
- Most pupils are White British.
- A slightly higher than average proportion of pupils have special educational needs or disability.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was carried out at no notice by two of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI).
- HMI observed several lessons in all of the classes in the school, some jointly with the headteacher. They also spoke with many pupils and scrutinised samples of pupils' work. They heard some pupils read and observed an assembly.
- The inspectors observed as pupils moved around the school and at lunchtimes and playtimes.
- HMI met with the headteacher, most members of staff and the chair of the local governing body.
- They also met with senior representatives, including the chief executive officers, of the academy chain currently leading the school, and of the chain set to take over in September 2016.
- HMI spoke with three senior members of Medway local authority's children's safeguarding team.
- They evaluated key documents, including the school development plan, its self-evaluation, records of assessments made of pupils and minutes of meetings.
- HMI took close account of the views of parents by talking with them at the school and also from the 44 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire. The school also provided its own recent parent questionnaire.

Inspection team

Robin Hammerton, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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Her Majesty's Inspector

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