

Inspection of Maundene School

Swallow Rise, Walderslade, Chatham, Kent ME5 7QB

Inspection dates: 14 and 15 June 2022

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

What is it like to attend this school?

Maundene is a school with high aspirations that nurtures and encourages.

Pupils welcome visitors with understandable pride. They enjoy school and learning. Relationships between pupils and staff are warm and respectful. Pupils feel secure in this environment and say things like, 'It is ok to make mistakes, as this is how we learn.'

The school places a strong emphasis on understanding and celebrating difference. It sensitively and carefully opens pupils' eyes to worlds they might not otherwise encounter. Following the COVID-19 pandemic, leaders have been prompt to reinstate trips and activities that enrich pupils' experiences.

Pupils behave well, developing a keen understanding of the impact of their actions on others. Adults respond quickly and well to any bullying concerns.

From the very start, children are taught to become confident communicators. Teachers equip pupils with the knowledge and skills they need to debate important issues about the world today and their own lives. Pupils' strong academic achievement goes hand-in-hand with the wealth of personal skills and qualities the school supports them to develop.

Leaders value pupils' opinions. The 'junior leadership team' helps shape the school's improvement plan, for example, changing how lunchtimes are run, or bringing more focus to local history.

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

This school's high ambitions for its pupils are reflected in its 'global curriculum'.

Leaders and staff have thought a lot about what they want pupils to learn in their time here. They have taken great care in creating a curriculum that supports this. At its heart, is the strong desire to give all pupils the best possible preparation for the future. A central aim is to reduce disadvantage in any form.

The school uses pupils' expanding subject knowledge to develop their curiosity, enquiring minds and critical thinking. This shines through when talking with pupils. For example, pupils show a depth of understanding when explaining concepts like stereotyping. Right from the start in the early years, adults place an emphasis on developing children's language so they can engage in important discussions.

Staff are prompt to adapt their plans to compensate for lost learning and missed opportunities through the pandemic. For example, in early years, children's physical development has been prioritised. The school has had great success in getting pupils into school. Attendance continues to be strong.

Staff are mostly successful at helping pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to access the same curriculum as their peers, although this is not entirely consistent. There are some strong examples of carefully targeted support for those with higher levels of need.

Teachers are free to adapt the curriculum as needed. They are well placed to do so because they know what the most important learning points are and what is coming next. Teachers check pupils' understanding regularly and pick up misconceptions quickly. Reception teachers make sure that early years children know the vocabulary that will help them in Year 1. Teachers help pupils make links with what they have learned before, which makes it easier to learn and remember new things. Pupils mostly concentrate and try hard in lessons.

There is a clear determination that every child will learn to read. Most pupils do so in a timely fashion. Pupils realise the importance of reading. The trust has prioritised investment in the library and reading curriculum to foster a love of reading. The books that pupils encounter in class are carefully chosen. Leaders and staff are currently working to embed a new approach to teaching phonics and early reading. They wisely seek to take a more consistent approach to this for the very few pupils who struggle, or need additional support to catch up.

There is a helpful culture of mutual support among staff. This allows the sharing of subject expertise for the benefit of pupils. Underpinning this is a sense of tight team work. In recently challenging times, the school has not stopped striving for improvements. Staff can readily signpost ways leaders make this manageable and achievable.

Pupils are clear that, 'it is ok to be different here'. They confidently discuss diversity and their understanding of relationships. The school takes proactive steps to promote good mental health. They discuss issues proactively and openly with pupils, introducing helpful strategies.

Local governors, who report to trustees, are generally knowledgeable about the school. They are diligent and thorough in their preparation for meetings to identify helpful things to explore with leaders. In this way, they offer constructive challenge to leaders in their shared determination to make the school the best it can be.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff are vigilant. When they raise concerns, the safeguarding lead acts on them promptly and effectively. Leaders do not hesitate to share important information with other professionals and agencies. They are tenacious and skilled in advocating for pupils and their families. This is because leaders draw on their strong knowledge of local safeguarding arrangements to challenge successfully their partners when they believe more support is needed. Record-keeping is usually detailed, thorough

and well organised. Leaders respond quickly to refine and tighten procedures if necessary in response to feedback following any review or monitoring.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- A recently introduced new approach to teaching phonics and early reading is not strongly established and embedded. While most pupils learn to read successfully in a timely fashion, those that struggle the most are not helped to keep up and/or catch up as promptly as they could be. Leaders should consistently embed a rigorous approach to all aspects of teaching early reading and phonics so that pupils who struggle the most have the best chances of success.
- The needs of pupils with SEND are not as consistently well met as they could be. Not all adults are equally adept at employing strategies that are used elsewhere in the school for removing barriers that may hamper pupils' achievement. Similarly, adults are not consistently skilful providing the support that may enhance the learning and retention of important knowledge. The new special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) has begun to build on existing strengths. Leaders should continue to do so to secure the best possible achievement for pupils with SEND.

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.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

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	145112
Local authority	Medway
Inspection number	10227674
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	397
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Sinead O'Brien
Headteacher	Dora Indresano
Website	https://www.maudene.medway.sch.uk/
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Maudene School became an academy school in January 2018. It is part of the Inspire Partnership Academy Trust. When its predecessor school of the same name was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good overall.
- The school does not use any alternative providers.

Information about this inspection

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

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, associate headteacher, SENCo and several trust leaders. The lead inspector met the chief executive officer of the Inspire Partnership Academy Trust, the chair of the local governing body and a parent governor. He also spoke with a trustee.
- As part of the evidence about the quality of education, inspectors carried out focused activities in relation to certain subjects (deep dives). Inspectors carried

out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, history and art. For each deep dive, 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 inspection team explored the school's work to safeguard pupils and held discussions with governors, leaders, staff and pupils. They scrutinised a range of documents and records including procedures for checking the suitability of staff.
- Inspectors observed the work of the school throughout the day including at break and lunchtimes. They met formally, and spoke informally, with staff and pupils. They also carefully considered survey responses returned by 75 parents and carers, 45 pupils and 26 staff.

Inspection team

Clive Dunn, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Jo Petch

Her Majesty's Inspector

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Ofsted Inspector

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