

Inspection of Maple Tree Primary School

162 Ramsgate Road, Ramsgate CT10 2EW

Inspection dates: 24 to 26 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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Does the school meet the independent school standards?	Yes
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What is it like to attend this school?

Maple Tree Primary School opened very recently to a small number of pupils in Years 3 to 6. Some pupils have previously had a negative experience of school. At Maple Tree, staff are very welcoming. The school provides a safe and consistent environment that enables pupils to settle well into learning and begin to thrive.

Staff and leaders have high expectations. They have been very successful at integrating pupils into the school and re-engaging them in learning. Pupils talk enthusiastically about how adults help and support them.

Staff use pupils' own interests to engage and enthuse them, but also ensure that pupils' interests are broadened. Pupils are learning to recognise the importance of a varied and balanced curriculum. They are developing a real sense of motivation and enthusiasm for school.

Parents say that staff understand their children's needs very well and adapt the learning to make it work for each individual. Parents appreciate the way that staff and leaders value their child and celebrate their strengths and successes.

Leaders plan to continue to increase the number of pupils at the school so that pupils learn in classes of up to five pupils. Staff and pupils are looking forward to more pupils joining so that they can grow the school community and develop new friendships.

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

Maple Tree Primary School opened to pupils in November 2022. However, leaders and staff have been in post for some time and have very carefully thought through every aspect of the school's offer for pupils.

Leaders are proud of the ambitious curriculum that they have developed. They recognise that their pupils often arrive at the school having had an interrupted primary education. Pupils often have gaps in their knowledge and understanding and may be at an early stage of learning to read.

Leaders carefully assess pupils' reading, their mathematics understanding and their social and emotional development. This enables staff to match teaching in reading and mathematics precisely with what pupils already know and can do. Staff have been well trained in the teaching of reading and mathematics. Pupils achieve increasingly well in these subjects. As pupils experience success in their own reading and are read high-quality texts throughout the school day, their engagement with, and love of, reading builds. Additionally, staff's support for pupils' well-being and mental health is threaded through all areas of the curriculum.

Leaders recognise that in other subjects, the school's curriculum is at an earlier stage. It has been thoughtfully developed, but only taught for around a month. In

some subjects, for example physical education and modern foreign languages, the planned curriculum enables pupils to develop their knowledge and understanding as leaders intend. This is because leaders have planned appropriate learning, in a sensible order. Teachers have identified pupils' starting points well and made sure that they build up their knowledge and understanding over time.

In a small number of subjects, leaders have decided that teachers will teach pupils the planned curriculum for pupils' year groups and plug any gaps in knowledge as they go. This is not working as well as leaders had hoped because the curriculum in these subjects does not take account of pupils' prior knowledge. In history, for example, pupils are taught about the Franco-Prussian War. They do not have the prior knowledge they need to fully understand the topic. Additionally, teachers do not have strong enough subject knowledge to explain the intended learning clearly. Pupils are not learning as well in these subjects.

Leaders have carefully planned the personal, social and health education (PSHE) curriculum. They adapt this in response to any known risks that pupils might face. For example, pupils learn about road safety and stranger danger before going on any trips. However, pupils sometimes arrive with significant gaps in their understanding of how to keep themselves safe, including online. Leaders need to think even more carefully about what is most important for these pupils to learn in PSHE so that they are better prepared for the next stage of their education.

With small numbers on roll, behaviour at the school is very calm and settled. Pupils attend well because they enjoy coming to this school and have positive relationships with staff. Leaders have a clear plan for how behaviour and attendance will be managed as pupil numbers grow.

Staff at the school feel well supported by leaders. They have had a range of training to support them in understanding pupils' needs and how to support pupils to learn effectively. Leaders recognise that they need to develop the staff training programme so that, over time, staff continue to build their subject-specific knowledge across the subjects they teach.

Leaders and those responsible for governance have a clear and shared vision of the education they want pupils to receive. They recognise the parts of the curriculum that need refining and this work is underway. Senior leaders and those responsible for governance recognise that as the school continues to develop, they need to strengthen the way that they check the impact of leaders' work.

The proprietor ensures that the independent school standards are consistently met. A governing board has been established, and the chair of governors has a clear understanding of his role. As the school grows, the proprietor intends to grow and develop the governing board. The school is compliant with schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have trained staff to identify pupils who need early help, those who are at risk of abuse, neglect or exploitation, or those who have been harmed. Leaders have ensured that there are systems in place for staff to record any concerns they identify. Leaders know how to secure pupils the help that they need.

Safer recruitment practice is rigorous, and this is reflected in personnel files. There are clear processes for managing allegations or safeguarding concerns about staff. However, not all staff understand these as well as they should. Leaders recognise that they need to revisit some parts of safeguarding training and ensure that staff understand how to manage concerns about staff, including low-level concerns.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and proprietor)

- In a small number of subjects, leaders have not thought carefully enough about what needs to be taught and why. Teaching in these subjects does not build sequentially from what pupils already know or take enough account of gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding. In these subjects, pupils are not building their knowledge well. Leaders need to re-evaluate their curriculum choices in these subjects and ensure that the curriculum is adapted to take account of pupils' starting points.
- In some subjects, teachers have less secure subject knowledge. The explanations teachers provide in these subjects can sometimes lack clarity and pupils do not learn as well. Leaders need to ensure that the professional development programme is aligned with the intended curriculum. This will ensure that, over time, teachers' subject knowledge across the subjects they teach improves.

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.

School details

Unique reference number	148862
DfE registration number	886/6169
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10246080
Type of school	Independent special school
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	7 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Proprietor	Parkview Education Limited
Chair	Terry McKenzie
Headteacher	Laura Stubbs
Annual fees (day pupils)	£77,595
Telephone number	01843 317080
Website	https://parkviewcare.co.uk/maple-tree-primary/
Email address	edu@parkviewcare.co.uk

Information about this school

- The school opened to pupils on 18 November 2022.
- All pupils have an education, health and care plan, and an identified social, emotional or mental health need. Pupils may also have a diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder.
- The headteacher is currently the acting headteacher of another school within the Parkview Education Limited group.
- The school is not using any external alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors carried out this inspection under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008. The purpose of the inspection is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

The school meets the independent school standards. These are the requirements set out in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with the headteacher and with the head of education within the Parkview Education Limited group.
- The inspector met with the sole director of Parkview Education Limited, the proprietor body, and with the chair of the governing board.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, the inspector met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited lessons, spoke to the teachers, spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The inspector also spoke to leaders about the quality of education provided in a range of other subjects.
- The inspector carried out other activities to check that the school meets the independent school standards. These included a check of the school premises and wider work to comply with health and safety laws (including fire safety). The inspector considered the school's approach to risk management. The inspector also checked the relevant policies and the school website.
- The inspector judged the effectiveness of safeguarding by meeting with leaders, discussing records of concerns and subsequent actions, and speaking with pupils and staff about this aspect of the school's work. The inspector confirmed that the right checks are being made to ensure that all staff, supply staff and members of

the proprietor body are suitable for the posts they occupy and also scrutinised a sample of personnel files.

- The inspector spoke to parents and carers to seek their views about the school.

Inspection team

Alice Roberts, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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