

Iford and Kingston Church of England Primary School

Wellgreen Lane, Kingston, Lewes, East Sussex BN7 3NR

Inspection dates

13 to 14 February 2019

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The school has changed considerably over the last few years. The building has been significantly extended and the number of pupils has grown by nearly a third.
- A helpful balance of long-standing and newer members of the team has helped leaders and staff through this challenging period. Together, they have ensured that the quality of education is good and improving.
- Teaching is consistently strong across the school. Pupils achieve well as a result.
- The carefully chosen values that underpin the school's work are well known by everyone.
- Pupils have a clear understanding of what these values mean in their daily lives, and most are successful in using them to guide their attitudes and choices.
- Pupils' personal development and behaviour are good. However, a very small minority of pupils and parents lack confidence in the effectiveness of the school's approaches to managing pupils' conduct and behaviour.
- Through their past success, leaders and governors have shown that they have the capacity to further improve the quality of teaching, the curriculum and pupils' outcomes.
- Recent work to develop mathematics has been fruitful. Mathematics teaching is a notable strength of the school.
- Leaders and staff have now, rightly, turned their focus to improving writing. Pupils do not make the best possible progress across the school to enable more to reach higher standards in writing.
- Pupils benefit from a varied and interesting daily diet of teaching and learning. However, the curriculum does not develop pupils' learning systematically enough in science and subjects other than English, mathematics and science (foundation subjects).
- Children's personal development and academic progress get off to an encouraging start in early years. Even so, some aspects of the provision are not of sufficiently high quality for children to achieve as well as they could.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Sustain the current focus on improving writing so that pupils make the best possible progress and more most-able pupils reach higher standards.
- Ensure that the curriculum develops pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding consistently well across the school in science and the foundation subjects.
- Secure the full confidence of the school's community in the management of pupils' conduct and behaviour by reviewing and adapting relevant policies and approaches.
- Ensure that children in the early years get off to the strongest possible start by:
 - raising expectations of how much young children can learn, particularly the most able
 - making better use of the outdoor area.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher, other leaders and governors are passionate about the basis for the school's thoughtfully chosen values. They are determined that the school's ethos and approach should reflect the diversity in modern Britain. The teaching and reinforcement of these values, and what they mean, are well established. This contributes well to the wide-ranging promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Leaders are frank about how the expansion and building work have had a big impact on the school in recent years. They are realistic and accurate in their own evaluations of almost all aspects of the school's effectiveness. There is a clear focus on securing further improvement, demonstrated by the well-chosen projects that are at various stages of development.
- The school benefits from a rich combination of long-standing and newer staff. This blend brings continuity, experience and expertise, as well as new ideas and fresh enthusiasm. Staff new to the school feel that the induction programme that is offered is both helpful and informative. It ensures that new staff settle quickly.
- The headteacher places a high level of importance on the continuing professional development of staff at all stages of their careers. The school's open culture supports effective discussion, debate and collaboration and the shared desire to improve. Staff appreciate that leaders are mindful of their well-being. They say that leaders rightly encourage and support them to achieve a suitable work-life balance.
- Leaders have invested considerable time and effort building and nurturing links beyond the school. Their laudable intention is to keep abreast of best practice elsewhere, with the moral desire to improve outcomes for all pupils. There are numerous examples of how the school has worked productively with others, or used training and research, to propel further improvements. Recent successes in mathematics are a prime example.
- The leadership of provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is very strong. Through careful assessment and close communication with class teachers and parents, the special educational needs coordinator ensures that pupils' needs are identified early. She maintains close relationships with a range of outside agencies to obtain relevant expert advice and ensure that staff are well trained.
- The pupil premium strategy is effective. Leaders' knowledge of individual pupils is strengthened through regular communication with parents, staff and pupils. Their aim is to identify specific barriers to better achievement. This knowledge is then used effectively to devise individualised support to meet the specific needs of the small number of disadvantaged pupils.
- In recent years, much of the sports premium has been used to fund specialist teaching in physical education (PE). This has allowed pupils access to specialist PE teaching but, more sustainably, has enabled class teachers to develop their own teaching skills and expertise. Leaders have evaluated the positive difference that this has made to pupils' experiences, participation and progress.
- The curriculum is varied, relevant and well enriched. Pupils learn a suitably broad range

of subject-specific knowledge and skills through the school's chosen topic-based approach. Planning ensures that the content of the curriculum is covered. However, in science and the foundation subjects, the curriculum is not systematic enough to ensure that pupils develop knowledge, understanding and skills as well as they could, right across the school.

Governance of the school

- Governors are understandably proud of the school's well-defined values-based ethos and approach. There is evident constructive debate among and between governors and school leaders focused on both the short- and long-term success of the school. The strong commitment and dedication of several very long-standing governors reflect the support for the school among its community.
- The governing body has a realistic and accurate view of the school's overall effectiveness and, particularly, its academic performance. Minutes of the governing body's meetings provide clear evidence of pertinent challenge to school leaders by governors. This includes sensible questions about pupils' outcomes. The minutes also show governors making thought-provoking points about the school's vision, values and finances.
- Governors take a systematic approach to fulfilling their statutory duties. They provide effective oversight of safeguarding arrangements and the use of additional funding.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Safeguarding is given a rightfully high priority across the school. Well-trained staff work closely together to keep pupils safe. Regular safeguarding updates, discussions and reminders in meetings keep this important work at the forefront of everyone's minds.
- The school's policies and procedures are tight and fit for purpose. Staff and leaders know confidently the action to take in response to any concerns. They follow these procedures diligently and with a keen awareness of their individual responsibility. Leaders do not hesitate to share relevant information with other agencies, at the appropriate times. Staff similarly feel empowered to contact other safeguarding authorities to protect pupils, should the need arise.
- Records relating to safeguarding are thorough, well organised and securely stored. The designated safeguarding lead keeps close oversight in order to identify any patterns in, or accumulations of, lower-level concerns.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teaching is typically strong across classes, particularly in mathematics and English. As a result, pupils can recall and explain their learning, demonstrating a secure understanding of a variety of concepts.
- Adults are skilful in using a wide range of questions to support and enhance learning. For example, they ask questions to probe pupils' understanding, challenge them to

think more deeply, or answer with greater precision. Teachers are also skilful at crafting questions to identify and address misconceptions.

- Mathematics teaching is particularly strong. Logical sequences of work develop pupils' knowledge and understanding systematically over time. From a young age, pupils become accustomed to explaining their thinking. Teachers make effective use of visual images and mathematical equipment to secure pupils' understanding of important concepts. Pupils subsequently use these resources and techniques well in different contexts and to carry out calculations accurately.
- Teachers make good use of skilled and knowledgeable teaching assistants to support learning throughout lessons. Adults' subject knowledge is strong. They use this to good effect, assessing how well pupils are doing and intervening promptly, where helpful. Teachers and teaching assistants facilitate discussions between pupils well.
- Motivating and precise phonics teaching in early years and Year 1 means that children and pupils are confident recalling previously learned sounds. Adults ensure that this important learning is repeatedly reinforced at opportune moments throughout the day.
- Teaching about grammar is generally a positive feature of English teaching. The intended learning behind tasks is well defined. Pupils are mostly successful in achieving these objectives in their work.
- Teachers' expectations are generally high. Overall, they cater well for the range of abilities in their classes. Carefully designed additional help sessions for pupils with SEND focus closely on pupils' specific areas of difficulty. Teachers are also sometimes successful in extending and challenging the most able pupils. However, there is scope for raising expectations of what the most able can achieve sooner.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils speak with confidence and pride about the school's values. They demonstrate their understanding of these values by explaining how they link with real-life actions and events. British values are similarly well promoted, for example by teaching about democracy through activities like the 'headteacher for the day' elections.
- Understandably, pupils appreciate that the school is a caring community. Pupils believe that they are all valued equally within the school, irrespective of circumstance. Parents are particularly impressed by the buddy system, which they feel plays a significant part in settling new pupils and making them feel welcome. This responsibility also promotes the social awareness of older pupils, who are proud to take on the role of a buddy.
- A calm and relaxing environment in breakfast club gives pupils who attend a positive start to the day. Pupils mix well during breaktimes, making these typically enjoyable experiences. Lunchtimes are lively but happy occasions. Throughout, supervision levels are sufficient but unobtrusive.
- Pupils develop a helpful knowledge and understanding of the steps they can take in different situations to keep themselves safe. Their awareness includes fire safety

procedures, internet safety, cyberbullying and cycling proficiency.

- Despite pupils' knowledge and understanding of the school's positive values, a few pupils do not consistently use this to shape the choices they make. For example, a few pupils and parents report that the school is not always fully successful in preventing what they perceive to be bullying. Pupils feel that there are adults in school that they know and trust and can go to with any concerns. Records show that leaders and staff take considerable care to investigate these concerns. They keep detailed notes and records of the action they have taken.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Most pupils behave well throughout the day. In lessons, pupils usually work well together, demonstrating respect and positive relationships. They respond promptly to class teachers' instructions, reflecting the well-embedded rules and routines.
- Behaviour on the playground is similarly mostly positive. Adults give calm reminders, where necessary, and pupils modify their behaviour swiftly, when required. Mutual respect and acceptance of the rules are well established. The school has had notable success in improving the behaviour of pupils with social, emotional and mental health needs. There have been no exclusions for many years.
- Some pupils demonstrate excellent learning behaviours. However, a handful of pupils in some classes are not consistently able to sustain this high level of purposeful focus when activities are more open ended, for example during discussion or editing tasks.
- Most pupils and parents believe that the school makes sure its pupils are well behaved. Nonetheless, a very small minority lack confidence in the school's success in managing pupils' conduct and behaviour. A few pupils report that lessons in some classes can be disrupted by silly behaviour, although this was not observed during the inspection.
- Leaders work determinedly and systematically to improve pupils' attendance. Despite their best endeavours, the school's overall attendance still hovers stubbornly just below the national average. Although few pupils miss a lot of school, attendance habits in general are still not positive enough to lift attendance rates higher. The school has a particular battle with lateness but is taking every effort to address this.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- The proportion of early years children achieving a good level of development has been consistently above the national average in recent years. This measure signifies children's readiness for the Year 1 curriculum. In 2018, the proportion was 90%, which is well above the national figure.
- The value of reading is emphasised throughout the school. Younger pupils get off to a quick start in learning to read. Results of the Year 1 phonics screening check have been in line with or above the national average for the last three years. Pupils who do not quite reach the expected level in Year 1 catch up quickly, so the proportion meeting the required standard by the end of Year 2 has been consistently above

average.

- Pupils get off to a similarly strong start in reading, writing and mathematics. Greater proportions of pupils than seen nationally have achieved at least the expected standards in these subjects by the end of key stage 1 in recent years. The proportions of the most able pupils reaching the higher standards (sometimes known as greater depth) have also often compared favourably with the national averages.
- In recent years, published progress measures across key stage 2, and the standards attained at the end of Year 6, have been affected by an influx of pupils with varying prior attainment into older year groups. Considering the proportions of pupils reaching both expected levels and the higher standards, attainment at the end of key stage 2 has been broadly average.
- Pupils' mathematical knowledge, understanding and skills develop securely and strongly across the school. Their knowledge of times tables facts is improving, and some pupils' recall is very quick. Pupils have a firm grasp of place value, enabling them to make accurate calculations. Their knowledge and precise use of mathematical terminology is developing well. Importantly, most pupils love learning mathematics and feel confident in the subject.
- Progress in writing for current pupils is improving but is not as consistently strong as it could be across the school. In some year groups, pupils are successful in the specific tasks they are given. However, they do not produce enough writing to develop greater fluency, despite the content often being accurate and technically sound. By Year 6, pupils successfully tackle a varied range of tasks, from writing references, to diary entries, to narrative. Some pupils master techniques such as using different sentence structures for effect, but this is not a consistent picture of success.
- The most able pupils write more fluently. The technical aspects of their writing are mostly accurate. They employ a wide range of punctuation and sentence structures. However, the content of their writing is sometimes slightly immature. They do not develop and sustain their ideas well enough to be securely working at greater depth.
- Pupils with SEND make similarly strong progress as their peers but, typically, with notably lower starting points. Some pupils make even better progress and begin to catch up with their peers. Leaders are tenacious in trying to achieve this success for all pupils.
- Pupils' outcomes are positive across a range of subjects. The school's topic work promotes pupils' personal and academic development. In art, pupils learn to use a range of media for both two- and three-dimensional pieces. This includes making masks, using clay to craft dragon's eyes, and using techniques such as batik and mosaic. A diverse range of science experiences in lessons, and through theme weeks, gives pupils a sound grounding in the subject.
- Pupils' strong progress overall means that they achieve standards in English and mathematics that stand them in good stead for their secondary education. The same is true for disadvantaged pupils. However, pupils do not sustain the sort of substantial progress that would enable more to reach the higher standards, particularly in writing. Progress is also more variable in science and across the wider curriculum. Pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills do not develop as consistently and systematically

as they could across subjects other than English and mathematics.

Early years provision

Good

- Before children even start, leaders and staff seek to quickly establish close links with parents. They harvest parents' knowledge of their children and combine this with information from pre-schools to gain a good sense of each child's existing capabilities. Children's prior knowledge and skills vary but, overall, they are broadly typical for their age.
- Children settle quickly and get used to the well-established routines. Mornings get off to a positive start. Children are at ease when entering the classroom and convey their confidence as they are warmly welcomed by the adults.
- Adults know each child well. Imaginative and creative teaching techniques capture children's interests and enthusiasm. Well-judged teamwork between the teacher and teaching assistant helps provide effective support for children. This effective support is maintained during carpet sessions, focused activities, and when children choose their own activities.
- The environment, indoors and out, is bright, attractive and well organised. Staff and leaders have included thoughtfully designed and clearly designated areas to promote the full range of children's learning and development. The activities created for children to explore are purposeful, productive and enticingly influenced by children's own interests. However, the potential of the outdoor area for promoting children's learning is not realised because it is not used well or often enough.
- Adults rightly place a strong emphasis on teaching phonics. The teacher reinforces accurate and precise sounds well, helping children develop the knowledge to read and spell. Learning from focused phonics sessions is reinforced repeatedly through both the environment and adults' reminders. Children are confident, learning and using their sounds in different situations.
- Children's progress, academically and personally, ensures they are sufficiently well prepared for Year 1. Their behaviour during the more formal parts of teaching is strong. Children sit and listen well, contributing their ideas and answers with enthusiasm. The teacher draws readily on the well-established reward systems to encourage positive conduct and behaviour.
- Leaders have a confident and realistic view of both the strengths and weaknesses of the early years provision. For example, adults are strongly aware of the need to identify and support children with SEND early, and they have evident success in this area. They are also aware of the need to challenge the most able children to make the best possible progress. However, there is scope for higher expectations of how much new learning can be introduced during focused teaching and learning sessions, particularly for the most able children.

School details

Unique reference number	114530
Local authority	East Sussex
Inspection number	10085496

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	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	200
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Linda Douglas and Reverend Geoff Daw (co-chairs)
Headteacher	Andrew Dobell
Telephone number	01273 474 973
Website	www.iford-kingston.e-sussex.sch.uk
Email address	head@iford-kingston.e-sussex.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	12 March 2009

Information about this school

- Over the last few years, the school's population has grown by approximately one third. It no longer has mixed-age classes, as it did when it was last inspected by Ofsted. There is now one class for each year group, including early years, which includes provision for Reception-aged children only.
- As a school with a designated religious character, the distinctiveness, ethos and collective worship are inspected separately under section 48. The school's most recent section 48 inspection took place shortly before this inspection. The report had not been published when this inspection took place.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed in all classes at least once. Just under half of these observations were carried out jointly with the headteacher.
- The team reviewed a wide range of pupils' work. Inspectors also spoke formally and informally with pupils about their learning and views of the school. An inspector listened to some pupils reading.
- Inspectors spoke with parents, staff, leaders, governors and representatives of the local authority and diocese. They analysed 95 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View.
- The inspection team observed the work of the school throughout the day. Inspectors also scrutinised a wide range of the school's documents and records. They paid particular attention to those relating to safeguarding and pupils' well-being.

Inspection team

Clive Dunn, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Stephanie Scutter

Ofsted Inspector

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