

Inspection of a good school: St John's Church of England Primary School

School Lane, St John's, Crowborough, East Sussex TN6 1SD

Inspection dates: 12–13 September 2019

Outcome

St John's Church of England Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are proud to be members of their school community and they love coming to school. Pupils, staff and parents have developed kind, caring and supportive relationships. Throughout the school day, pupils play and learn together harmoniously. Pupils respond with maturity and commitment to the high expectations set by leaders.

Pupils particularly value the school's buddy programme. When children first start school, older pupils ('buddies') help the children to learn the school's rules and routines. The relationship the buddies develop with the children is incredibly special. During the inspection, I saw them showing a genuine interest in getting to know the children. They asked them about their day and chatted with them during lunchtime. This is an example of the strong relationships embedded throughout the school.

Pupils have no concerns about bullying. They say that adults are quick to sort out the 'normal ups and downs' of school life. This is because pupils each have a trusted adult who will listen to them and support them if they have any worries.

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

Leaders, including governors, have set high expectations for what pupils can achieve. They want the very best outcomes for all their pupils. The headteacher is supported by a dedicated team of staff. Together, they have planned an aspirational curriculum.

A challenging sequence of learning has been set out in all subjects. For example, in mathematics teachers plan learning so that each lesson builds on what pupils already know and can do. Teachers have strong mathematical subject knowledge. They explain and show pupils different mathematical concepts clearly. They use pictures and apparatus, for example cubes, to support pupils' understanding. Teachers ask good questions to check pupils' understanding. They give pupils extra help when they need it. Because of this, pupils develop a secure understanding in mathematics.

The school's early reading programme sets out the order in which pupils should learn phonics (letters and the sounds they represent). Teachers are currently refining the organisation of the school's reading books. This is so that the pupils can practise the letters and sounds they have learned in class in the books they read at home. Some adults model these early reading skills well, questioning and supporting pupils' understanding carefully. Some adults are less skilled in doing this. In key stage 2, pupils develop into confident readers who love to read. Teachers inspire pupils by introducing them to exciting books. As one pupil said, 'We read every chance we get.'

This year, leaders have reviewed some of the subjects in the school's curriculum, for example art. Leaders have also supported teachers to develop strong subject knowledge. Teachers explain skilfully the skills and knowledge pupils need to learn. Pupils respond positively, practising their skills with concentration. For example, in Year 2 pupils worked very hard to improve their sculpting techniques. Leaders are now embedding these higher expectations.

Leaders and teachers also plan a wide range of activities to enrich pupils' learning. Pupils take part in a variety of music and sporting events. Leaders plan residential trips such as the 'school camp'. These opportunities help pupils to develop their confidence and resilience. They are able to challenge themselves and take risks safely. Pupils and parents value these wide-ranging opportunities.

The school's special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) knows pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) very well. She makes careful plans so that these pupils get the support they need. Leaders check that the plans are right for these pupils. They make changes when things are not working. Leaders also make sure that all pupils are included in every aspect of school life. This includes those who are disadvantaged and those with SEND.

Pupils behave well during lessons. They work hard, with high levels of concentration. It is clear that their learning is important to them and they try their best. Teachers have developed clear routines and expectations. This means that no learning time is wasted.

Children settle into the early years quickly and come to school happily. This is because of the strong, nurturing relationships they form with adults and other pupils. They soon learn the routines and their behaviour is of a high standard. Teachers plan activities that help the children to practise key skills. For example, children practise their listening skills during story time. They join in with different parts of the story confidently and with enthusiasm. Children enjoy these activities.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders make sure that the school's work to keep children safe is thorough and robust. Governors check that this work is effective. Leaders provide all staff with detailed training. This means that all staff understand what to do if they have a concern about a pupils' welfare. Pupils' safety remains the top priority for everyone.

Leaders and teachers make sure that pupils learn how to keep themselves safe in a range of different situations. As a result, pupils feel safe. They know how to keep themselves safe online. For example, they understand the importance of keeping their personal information safe.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders are in the process of making sure books closely match pupils' phonics knowledge. This is important and needs to be completed as soon as possible. Once completed, this will need to be reviewed by leaders to check that it is working. Some adults who support pupils who struggle with their reading occasionally introduce misconceptions. Leaders need to ensure that all adults who support pupils in phonics are properly trained.
- While there are strengths in the curriculum across a range of subjects, leaders should ensure that recent work undertaken to strengthen the curriculum is embedded, for example in art. This is so that pupils' learning builds on what pupils have studied before and so that they achieve the best possible outcomes across subjects.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good school or non-exempt outstanding school. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that the school could now be better than good or that standards may be declining, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will convert the section 8 inspection to a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the second section 8 inspection since we judged St John's Church of England Primary School to be good on 9 and 10 June 2011.

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 Ofsted Parent View information 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 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	114549
Local authority	East Sussex
Inspection number	10111278
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	210
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Mr Craig Dawson (co-chair), Ms Andrea Griffiths (co-chair)
Headteacher	Mrs Laura Cooper
Website	https://stjohnsprimary.org
Date of previous inspection	2 February 2016

Information about this school

- St John’s Church of England Primary School, Crowborough, is located in the Diocese of Chichester. Its last section 48 inspection took place in February 2017. The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is well below the national average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is well below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is well below the national average.

Information about this inspection

- During the inspection I met with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher and the SENCo. I also met with governors, a representative from the local authority and a representative from the diocese.
- In order to explore the quality of education I focused on three subjects: reading, mathematics and art. This included meeting with the curriculum leaders for these subjects, visiting lessons, talking to pupils, listening to pupils read, speaking with teachers and looking at pupils’ work.

- I met with the school's designated safeguarding leads and scrutinised the school's safeguarding records. This included a check on the single central record of recruitment checks on adults working with pupils.
- During breaktime and lunchtime I observed pupils' behaviour and spoke to pupils informally.
- I took into account 72 responses to Ofsted Parent View, including 48 free-text comments. I also met with parents at the beginning of the first day.
- I met with a range of staff during the inspection, including teachers and support staff. Twelve responses to the staff survey were also considered.

Inspection team

Leah Goulding, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates:
<http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2019