

Inspection of a good school: Mayfield Church of England Primary School

Fletching Street, Mayfield, East Sussex TN20 6TA

Inspection dates:

24–25 September 2019

Outcome

Mayfield Church of England Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils and staff offer a very warm welcome at this school. Pupils are friendly and happy. Those who are new to the school make friends and settle in quickly. One parent reflected the views of many when they said that the school is a 'kind, nurturing and safe space'.

Leaders and teachers have established high expectations of all pupils' learning and behaviour. Pupils rise to these challenges. Pupils enjoy learning and behave well. They listen attentively to their teachers and try hard with their work. They move around the school sensibly and calmly. During lessons, there is no disruption to pupils' learning.

At playtimes and lunchtimes, most pupils play together nicely. The dining hall offers a pleasant environment for pupils to sit and chat quietly over their lunch. Occasionally, at these times, there is some silly behaviour and teasing. Pupils are not worried by this because adults sort it out quickly. Pupils feel supported by the adults in school, and they know that there is always someone to listen to them if they have any worries. Pupils have no concerns about bullying and say that it rarely happens. Leaders take swift, effective action to deal with the rare incidents that do occur.

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

Leaders have planned a challenging curriculum for all subjects. They have mapped out the key knowledge and skills that they want all pupils to learn. Leaders have ensured that most subjects are taught consistently well. They make sure that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and those who are disadvantaged are given effective support. As a result, they do well in their learning.

In mathematics, teachers plan learning that builds on what pupils already know and can do. In the early years, children practise their counting skills in lots of different ways. They count when finger painting and by going outside to collect natural objects such as pine cones. These activities keep children interested in their learning. Teachers have strong mathematical subject knowledge. They give clear explanations and question pupils

skilfully. In this way, teachers explore pupils' understanding and challenge their thinking so that pupils do well in this subject. They develop key knowledge and skills across the mathematics curriculum.

Leaders and teachers have created a culture in which pupils love reading. Teachers choose books that capture pupils' interest. This inspires pupils to read. Reading is taught well. Pupils get off to a good start in their reading because of strong phonics teaching, which is carefully organised. Teachers have good subject knowledge. When pupils are reading, however, they sometimes struggle to sound out unknown words. This is because leaders have not yet matched the pupils' reading books closely enough to the phonics pupils have been taught.

Some foundation subjects are planned and taught very well. For example, in history pupils develop a secure understanding of different time periods. They are able to discuss their understanding with confidence. Older pupils are able to use their knowledge in different ways. They ask thoughtful questions about historical events. They also come to sensible conclusions about the actions of people from history. Pupils develop a genuine interest in this subject. They discuss their understanding with maturity.

Leaders have not yet achieved their ambitions in all subjects. In particular, while leaders have planned the curriculum for geography, computing, French and music carefully, the teaching of these subjects is not yet secure. Leaders are now taking steps to make sure that teaching is improved in these subjects so that pupils learn well.

Teachers in the early years have developed positive, nurturing relationships with the children. Adults in the setting are patient and supportive. They gently remind pupils how to behave and show them the right thing to do.

Leaders enrich the school's curriculum with opportunities that support pupils' personal development. Leaders fully include all pupils in all aspects of school life, including pupils with SEND and those who are disadvantaged. For example, leaders plan a 'prayer spaces' week. These activities give pupils the chance to spend time in personal reflection. During a recent 'prayer spaces' week, pupils considered current issues. For example, pupils thought about the issues affecting refugees. They also spent time reflecting in a prayer space focused on 'letting go of your worries'.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders prioritise pupils' safety and welfare. They have established robust safeguarding policies and procedures. Leaders provide detailed training for all staff. This means that all staff know what to do if they have any concerns about a pupil's welfare.

Leaders carry out all the necessary pre-employment checks on adults working in the school. All safeguarding records are thorough and well organised.

Through the school's curriculum, pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe. For

example, workshops and assemblies give pupils key messages about keeping safe. As a result, pupils know what steps to take to keep safe, including when online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- While the school's curriculum has been carefully planned and sequenced in all subjects, this planning is not yet implemented fully in all subjects, in particular in geography, computing, music and French. However, it is clear from the actions that leaders have already taken to address this, that they are in the process of ensuring that these subjects quickly become as equally embedded as all others. This work needs to be continued so that teaching is strong in all subjects and pupils learn well across the curriculum. The impact of leaders' actions will need to be monitored closely to ensure that it has been effective.
- Leaders need to ensure that pupils' reading books closely match the planned sequence of phonics teaching. This needs to be completed as quickly as possible. This is so that pupils can apply the phonics they have been taught to successfully decode unknown words. Once this has been completed, leaders will need to check that it is working effectively.

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 Mayfield Church of England Primary School to be good on 3–4 November 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	114512
Local authority	East Sussex
Inspection number	10111248
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	160
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Mr David Robson
Headteacher	Mrs Debbie Bennett
Website	www.mayfieldcep.e-sussex.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	15 December 2015

Information about this school

- Mayfield Church of England Primary School is part of the Weald Federation. The federation was formed in September 2019, when the Aspire Federation and the Saxonbury Federation amalgamated. The federation consists of four schools, led by an executive headteacher and governed by a shared governing body.
- The school is located in the Diocese of Chichester. Its last section 48 inspection took place in May 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 executive headteacher, the head of school, the special educational needs coordinator and the chair of governors. I also held telephone conversations with 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 history. 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. Twelve responses to the pupils' survey were also considered.
- I took into account 32 responses to Ofsted Parent View, including 17 free-text comments. I also met with parents at the beginning and end of the first day.
- I met with a range of staff during the inspection, including teachers and support staff. Eleven responses to the staff survey were also considered.

Inspection team

Leah Goulding, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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