

# Inspection of Telscombe Cliffs Primary School and Nursery

Telscombe Cliffs Way, Telscombe Cliffs, Peacehaven, East Sussex BN10 7DE

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Inspection dates: 21 and 22 September 2021

## **Overall effectiveness**

## **Requires improvement**

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The quality of education

**Requires improvement**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Good**

Personal development

**Requires improvement**

Leadership and management

**Requires improvement**

Early years provision

**Good**

Previous inspection grade

Good

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils are happy and safe at Telscombe Cliffs Primary School and Nursery. They say that they are 'all friends who look after each other'. Leaders' focus on pupils' well-being has helped them to settle back into school after the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic. Pupils enjoy coming into school.

Teachers have high expectations for pupils' behaviour. Pupils say that behaviour is better now than it used to be. If any silly behaviour happens, teachers will deal with it. When talking to inspectors, pupils could not remember any bullying that had happened recently at their school but could recall when it had happened in the past. They feel that if bullying happened now, staff would listen and act quickly to stop it.

Children in the early years get off to a good start because learning is well planned. Older pupils work hard and concentrate in lessons, but teachers are not ambitious enough for their learning. Pupils do not learn and remember the essential knowledge they need in all subjects because the curriculum is not yet fully formed. In particular, the lower-ability pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are not supported well enough with their learning.

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

Senior leaders have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. The interim executive board are working strategically alongside the acting headteacher with a sharp focus on school improvement. Aply supported by the deputy headteachers, the acting headteacher has already brought about some significant changes, most notably in pupils' behaviour. They are polite and respectful to each other and their teachers. At breaktimes, pupils play sensibly together. In the classroom, they generally work hard and concentrate. When, on occasion, pupils are off task teachers swiftly use the new agreed procedures to deal with this.

There is more to do, however, to improve pupils' learning. More often than not, subject leaders are new to their role and many teachers are new to the school. Staff do not yet have secure enough knowledge across the full range of subjects. Senior leaders have recently purchased commercial schemes to support the planning and delivery of the curriculum, but training so far has focused more on how to teach than what to teach. Staff are not yet fully familiar or confident with the content.

The newness of the curriculum means that what leaders want to see in the classroom is not always happening. Teachers do not always plan and check on learning in such a way as to help pupils to remember key knowledge and build on this over time. For example, in mathematics, teachers do not always check that pupils have a secure understanding of prior knowledge and skills before teaching the next steps. This means that pupils do not learn as effectively as they should. The exception to this is in early years where staff plan activities that interest children and build on what they already know. Staff in the Nursery and Reception classes nurture

children's communication skills. They model spoken English well and skilfully question children to encourage them to explain their thinking across the different areas of learning.

Leaders are determined that all pupils will be reading at an appropriate level for their age. In reality, lower-ability pupils or those with SEND do not always succeed in doing so because teachers are not yet sufficiently skilled to meet their needs. They are not supported well to keep up and build their skills to become fluent readers. The same is true for these pupils in other subjects. Too often, the work planned for them is too hard, so leaders rely on providing extra support to try to help them catch up.

Leaders ensure that pupils have a range of opportunities which extend beyond their academic education. Pupils enjoy the many clubs they can join, with Mindful Yoga being a particular favourite. Leaders' recent review of the school's vision and values means that pupils understand the importance of having respect and tolerance of others. They say that everyone is different, and difference is good. However, pupils do not have a deep enough understanding of cultural differences or fundamental British values.

Leaders prioritise the well-being of pupils and staff. The school's well-being expert helps pupils deal with changes and supports them with looking forward to the future. Training for staff is well organised and planned in advance. However, as yet many staff are new to leadership roles and have not had the training they need to develop their expertise and skills.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders are passionate about supporting vulnerable families and did this particularly well during lockdown.

Safeguarding processes are robust and enable leaders to identify and help pupils who may be at risk of harm. All staff know pupils well and understand the types of vulnerabilities that may be barriers to keeping safe. Leaders ensure that staff know and fully understand the reporting structures in school. Training is in place to ensure members of staff new to the school are inducted fully. Those responsible for governance ensure that school leaders are safer recruitment trained.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- The teaching of reading is not planned well enough to meet the needs of all pupils. This means some pupils, especially lower-attainers and those with SEND, do not read as well as they should. Leaders must ensure that teachers understand how to adapt teaching to support all pupils to learn to read. They

must make sure that all pupils at an early stage of reading are given books that support them to practise the sounds they have already learned.

- Many subjects in the curriculum are not planned clearly enough to ensure that pupils learn the right things in the right order. As a result, pupils have gaps in their knowledge. Senior leaders must ensure that training and support are provided for subject leaders to develop their roles so that there is a well-sequenced curriculum in each subject. In turn, subject leaders should ensure that teachers are supported to deliver the curriculum to a high quality, including how to check that pupils remember the important knowledge.
- Teachers do not plan effectively for the lower-ability pupils, or pupils with SEND. Leaders must ensure that staff have the knowledge they need to plan and implement sequences of work that meet the academic needs of these pupils.
- Pupils do not have a deep enough understanding of different cultures, including fundamental British values. Leaders need to develop this aspect of the curriculum to enable pupils to increase their understanding of what it is like to live in modern Britain.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	114420
<b>Local authority</b>	East Sussex
<b>Inspection number</b>	10199925
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	2 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	659
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Interim executive board
<b>Chair</b>	Anne Allison
<b>Headteacher</b>	Paul Prest
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.telscombecliffsprimary.co.uk">www.telscombecliffsprimary.co.uk</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	6 and 7 July 2016, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- Since the last inspection, there have been significant changes of staff, including the headteacher. The current acting headteacher has been in post since October 2020.
- The local authority replaced the governing body with an interim executive board in May 2020.
- The school takes pupils from age two years into the Nursery.
- There are breakfast and after-school clubs on site, which are operated by the school.
- The school currently uses one registered alternative provider.

## 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 school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation.

- Inspectors met with the acting headteacher, deputy headteachers and extended leadership team, including leaders responsible for SEND, pastoral development and safeguarding. One inspector spoke to the alternative provider.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, computing, physical education and music. This entailed discussions with subject leaders, visits to lessons, looking at examples of work, discussions with teachers, discussions with pupils and listening to pupils read to an adult.
- A wide range of school documents were scrutinised, including the school improvement plan, the school's self-evaluation and curriculum subject plans.
- During the inspection, inspectors reviewed records relating to pupils' behaviour, attendance, exclusions and bullying.
- The lead inspector met with representatives of the interim executive board and talked to a representative of the local authority by telephone.
- The inspection team considered how well the school protects pupils and keeps them safe. Inspectors met with the designated leader for safeguarding, reviewed a range of documentation and talked to staff and pupils. Inspectors also reviewed the school's safeguarding curriculum.
- The inspectors gathered the view of parents through Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and associated free-text comments. Inspectors also considered responses to Ofsted's staff survey as part of this inspection.
- An inspector visited the before- and after-school provision to check its safeguarding arrangements.

## Inspection team

Luisa Gould, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Rosemary Keen	Ofsted Inspector
Claire Martin-O'Donoghue	Ofsted Inspector
Harry Ingham	Her Majesty's Inspector

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