

Inspection of Graffham Church of England Infant School (Voluntary Controlled)

Graffham, Petworth, West Sussex GU28 0NJ

Inspection dates: 12 and 13 October 2021

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Early years provision **Good**

Previous inspection grade

Ofsted has not previously inspected Graffham Infant School under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. However, Ofsted previously judged Graffham Infant School to be outstanding, before it became a voluntary-aided school. From then until November 2020, the school was exempted by law from routine inspection, so there has been a longer gap than usual between inspections.

Judgements in this report are based on the current inspection framework and also reflect changes that may have happened in Graffham's effectiveness before and after it became a voluntary-aided school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils love coming to this small, welcoming village school. It is full of happy smiles and thoughtful words. The school's values, known as the '7Cs', and motto, 'kind hands, caring minds', flow through all aspects of school life. Pupils feel safe and valued. Pupils and staff do not accept any form of bullying or unkindness. They trust adults and know that they will help them should they have a worry.

Staff have high expectations. They want the best for all pupils. Staff know pupils and their families well. Pupils enjoy learning because staff make lessons interesting and fun. There is a buzz of excitement. Pupils are determined to work hard and are proud of their achievements.

Pupils behave well and care about others. Those pupils who need support to understand their feelings and manage their emotions get the help they need. Playtimes are harmonious. They enjoy playing with their friends in the sandpit or using the wide variety of equipment that is available.

Parents and carers are highly appreciative of the school. One parent echoed the thoughts of many by saying: 'This is a nurturing, supportive school that has our child's happiness at the centre of all that it does.'

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

Graffham is a vibrant school where learning is engaging and exciting. Leaders and staff have high aspirations for all pupils. Leaders have designed an ambitious and broad curriculum. This provides all pupils with rich experiences which broaden their horizons further. Leaders make sure that the needs of the small number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are identified appropriately. Staff make sure that these pupils get the right support to help them learn well in most subjects.

Leaders are rightly focusing their efforts on further strengthening the curriculum. In subjects such as English and mathematics, the curriculum is well defined. The important knowledge pupils should learn, and the order in which they should learn it, is clearly set out. This helps teachers know exactly what pupils need to learn and remember well. However, not all other subjects are planned as precisely yet. Work is under way to address this.

Overall, staff have secure subject knowledge. Useful training for teachers in reading, geography and mathematics is helping to ensure that these subjects are taught well. Teachers make sure that pupils' learning carefully builds on what they already know and can do. However, in some subjects this is not as strong. Leaders have not ensured that teachers have the necessary expertise in all subjects. This means that pupils do not achieve as well as they could in these subjects.

Reading is a high priority. Children are introduced to phonics as soon as they start in early years. Adults read regularly to children, who look forward to listening and sharing their ideas. The teaching of phonics is well organised and effective. Staff use their expert knowledge to support pupils and help them to learn to read quickly. They articulate and model sounds accurately to pupils. Staff identify any pupil who is falling behind and provide extra support to help them catch up. Pupils regularly read engaging books which are well matched to the sounds they are learning. This helps them to read accurately and become increasingly confident and fluent.

Pupils, including children in early years, are polite and considerate towards one another. In lessons, they are enthusiastic and show positive attitudes to their learning. They share and discuss their ideas maturely. Staff help to foster the attitudes that pupils need to be successful learners. For example, pupils learn to take risks and develop their creative ideas.

Pupils' personal development is strong. A wide range of well-considered clubs, visits and experiences are on offer for pupils to develop their talents and interests. The school's core Christian values of kindness, respect, hope, responsibility and friendship help to guide pupils to think about the wider difference they can make in their community and beyond. For instance, pupils learn about 'their duty to protect the planet' and to be 'custodians of nature'.

Governors know the school's priorities. They are reflective and thoughtful about their work. They are rightly refocused on supporting and challenging leaders about the quality of education. Staff are proud to belong to the school. They feel that they can discuss their views freely and that their well-being is considered carefully.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff fully understand that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. All appropriate checks are completed to ensure the suitability of staff. Regular training ensures that staff know what to do if they have a concern. Leaders make sure that concerns are noted and responded to quickly. Leaders work effectively with outside agencies to support pupils and their families when required. Through the curriculum, pupils learn about keeping safe. Pupils feel confident in reporting any concerns they may have and feel that they will be acted upon.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have not made sure that the curriculum in all foundation subjects is well sequenced and coherent. Pupils do not learn as well as they could in these subjects. Leaders need to continue to develop the curriculum so that it clearly sets out the order in which pupils should learn the essential knowledge across all

subjects. It is clear from leaders' actions that they are already taking steps to bring this about.

- In some subjects in the foundation curriculum, staff have variable pedagogical knowledge. This limits how well all pupils, including those with SEND, develop their knowledge and understanding. Leaders should ensure that teachers are confident and skilled in the content they are delivering.

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

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| Unique reference number | 148396 |
| Local authority | West Sussex |
| Inspection number | 10201071 |
| Type of school | Infant |
| School category | Voluntary controlled |
| Age range of pupils | 4 to 7 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 57 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair of governing body | Emma Vernon |
| Headteacher | Helen Martin |
| Website | http://www.graffhamandduncton.w-sussex.sch.uk/ |
| Date of previous inspection | Not previously inspected |

Information about this school

- This is a Church of England voluntary controlled primary school. It is part of the Lavington Park Federation.
- The last section 48 statutory inspection of Anglican and Methodist schools took place in January 2019.
- The school is much smaller than the average-sized primary school. It has two mixed-age classes.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.

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 headteacher, the deputy headteacher and members of staff. Inspectors also spoke to the special educational needs coordinator.
- Inspectors met with four governors, including the chair of the governing body. Inspectors also met with a representative from West Sussex local authority and a representative of the Diocese of Chichester.
- To inspect safeguarding, inspectors checked the single central record of recruitment checks and talked to leaders responsible for safeguarding. Inspectors also talked to a range of staff and pupils.
- Inspectors considered the 16 responses to the confidential staff survey and spoke to a range of staff about their views of the school.
- Inspectors took account of the 47 responses to Ofsted’s Parent View questionnaire and 30 additional free-text responses. Inspectors spoke to several parents during the inspection.
- Inspectors met with a range of pupils to discuss their views about the school and talked to pupils informally during social times and in lessons. There were 13 responses to Ofsted’s online pupils’ survey.
- As part of our inspection of early years, inspectors met with the early years leader and visited the mixed-age Reception class.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documentation, including the school’s self-evaluation and school development plan, pupil premium and catch-up funding plans.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, art and geography. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at a sample of pupils’ work. Inspectors also heard a selection of pupils read.

Inspection team

Louise Walker, lead inspector

Her Majesty’s Inspector

Sue Keeling

Her Majesty’s Inspector

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