

Inspection of Pevensey and Westham CofE Primary School

High Street, Westham, Pevensey, East Sussex BN24 5LP

Inspection dates: 19 and 20 January 2022

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Good

Early years provision

Requires improvement

Previous inspection grade

Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy and enjoy each other's company. Relationships between pupils and adults are warm and respectful. Pupils feel safe and secure because dedicated adults work together as a team. One pupil described Pevensey and Westham as 'a home away from home'.

Pupils talk about the school's core values, such as forgiveness and resilience. Pupils describe how and why they demonstrate the values in their learning and behaviour. They feel they help them to do better. Pupils appreciate opportunities to explore their talents and interests in a range of clubs, activities and visits. Pupils enjoy their lessons and look forward to school each day.

Pupils are calm and focused in class, and learning is rarely disrupted by the behaviour of others. Pupils are taught and encouraged to behave well. When bullying is identified, staff act swiftly and effectively to address it. Pupils trust staff to listen to them and sort out any worries they may have.

Parents and carers appreciate the school's nurturing ethos and dedicated staff. One parent said, 'The staff really care about the pupils and there is a real feel of community.' Many parents are excited about the impact the principled headteacher is having on improving the school and, specifically, their child's learning.

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

Standards declined significantly since the last inspection and oversight by governors was weak. The local authority took swift action in 2020 to intervene and provide significant support. New leaders and governors were appointed to deliver the rapid improvements needed. This is now a strongly improving school, but leaders recognise there is more to do.

Leaders have introduced well-sequenced curriculum plans, for example in phonics, and have ensured that pupils are being taught in a consistent way. By improving the school's curriculum in reading, writing and mathematics, leaders are already helping pupils to achieve more.

Leaders recognise that ensuring all children learn to read is essential. Leaders have introduced a well-structured phonics programme, which begins as soon as children join the school in the early years. This gives them the best start possible. Pupils enjoy their daily phonics sessions. This is because teaching is precise, and children can see how quickly their reading develops. Those who are struggling are quickly identified and receive effective help from well-trained staff. The books that pupils are given to read support their learning because they are well matched to the sounds they learn.

In other areas of learning and subjects, the essential things pupils need to know are not clear enough, for example in science, history or physical education (PE). It is not

always clear to teachers, including those in the Reception Year, what knowledge they need to teach, and in what order. Some staff do not have strong subject knowledge in all the areas they need to teach. As a result, there are gaps in what pupils know. Some pupils' misconceptions have not been identified and addressed.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are taught alongside their peers in lessons. Adults make appropriate adjustments to ensure expectations of learning are the same for all. Although stronger in English and mathematics, success in meeting the needs of pupils with SEND remains too variable across the school. Leaders are aware of this and have plans in place to address it.

Pupils behave well because staff model positive behaviour and attitudes. Children in the early years learn how to regulate their behaviour and follow routines so they can focus on their learning. Pupils recognise the importance of treating others with respect. They are kind and considerate in the corridors and at social times. Attendance and punctuality of pupils have improved because of leaders' strong oversight, high-profile communications and celebration of successes.

Leaders prioritise opportunities for pupils to develop personally, starting in the early years. Leaders believe that every child is entitled to a range of rich experiences. These include clubs, theatre scholarships, charity work and re-establishing community links to the church. Residential trips for Year 6 have continued despite the challenges of the pandemic. Pupils learn and appreciate responsibility through roles such as peer mediators, school councillors and sports leaders. Pupils debate issues maturely and understand how their actions impact others.

Governors are knowledgeable, skilled and able to fulfil their duties. They are committed to providing the challenge that the school needs. Governors work closely with leaders to develop strategic plans and check rigorously that these are working as intended. Governors offer leaders useful support to help them achieve their goals. They do this, for example, by reviewing and providing support for pupils with SEND and improving provision in the early years.

Leaders have already secured substantial support from parents, teachers and pupils. Staff appreciate and benefit from the expertise leaders bring to the school. Leaders are considerate of staff workload and well-being without compromising their ambitions to make further improvements.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff are well trained to recognise signs of harm, which helps them identify children who may be at risk. They report any concerns promptly and leaders make sure that these are followed up. Leaders know their pupils well, so they are alert to changes in their most vulnerable families' circumstances and in the local context. Checks on adults who work in school are appropriate and monitored by governors.

Occasionally, leaders need to be more proactive and involve other agencies quickly to ensure children get the help they need in a timely manner. Some minor record-keeping inaccuracies were found, that leaders are now putting right.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Curriculum thinking, in subjects other than English and mathematics, does not have sufficient detail to set out the essential knowledge pupils should know and remember. This affects the effectiveness of teaching, including for early years and pupils with SEND. Pupils cannot always securely build on prior knowledge because the sequence of identified, small steps has not yet been fully thought through. Leaders should ensure that curriculum thinking is precise enough about what pupils need to learn and the best order in which to learn it.
- Some staff do not have the depth of subject knowledge they need to teach all the areas of the curriculum. This has an impact on how well pupils achieve. Leaders should ensure that staff are trained so that they have the knowledge they need to teach all subjects effectively.

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

Unique reference number	114519
Local authority	East Sussex
Inspection number	10211338
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	5 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	416
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Richard Sage
Headteacher	Luke Paramor
Website	www.pevenseyschool.org.uk
Dates of previous inspection	31 January and 1 February 2017, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school does not currently use any alternative provision for pupils.
- A section 48 inspection to evaluate the distinctiveness and effectiveness of Pevensey and Westham CofE Primary School took place in March 2017. The school's next section 48 inspection is due this academic year.
- The school operates a breakfast and an after-school club. This provision is managed by the school.

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

- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, senior leaders and the special educational needs coordinator. The lead inspector met with five governors, including the chair of the governing body.

- The lead inspector spoke separately by telephone with representatives from the local authority and the Diocese of Chichester.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, history and PE. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their work and looked at samples of pupils' work. The lead inspector also heard pupils read.
- To inspect safeguarding, inspectors reviewed a wide range of safeguarding documents, including the school's record of recruitment checks. An inspector met with the designated safeguarding lead. Inspectors also spoke with pupils and staff.
- Inspectors took account of parents' responses to Ofsted's survey, Ofsted Parent View, and parents' written comments. An inspector also talked with some parents on the afternoon of the first day of the inspection. The lead inspector also considered a separate letter from a parent.
- Inspectors gathered pupils' views throughout the day, during classroom visits and at lunchtime. Inspectors also considered the responses to Ofsted's pupil survey.
- Inspectors met with a range of staff to gather their views about the school and took account of responses to Ofsted's confidential staff survey.

Inspection team

Gareth Flemington, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Lee Selby	Her Majesty's Inspector
Shazia Akram	Her Majesty's Inspector

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