

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

Church Road, Lyminge, Folkestone, Kent CT18 8JA

Inspection dates:

8 and 9 November 2023

Outcome

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

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils thrive in this friendly, kind and caring school. Pupils, parents and staff all speak of the school as one big family. Pupils love the school. They are very happy, behave extremely well and are safe at school. Year 6 pupils correctly describe their school as a vibrant, inclusive learning community. Parents appreciate this culture, with one saying, 'It isn't just a school, it's a community that cares deeply about its pupils' education and general well-being.'

The school is determined that all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), will achieve their very best. Pupils meet the school's high expectations for their personal, social and academic achievements. This means they are very well prepared for the next stage in their education and later life. The school's values of love, forgiveness, trust, perseverance and justice are deeply embedded and demonstrated very ably by pupils in everything they do. Staff know the pupils very well and there are positive and trusting relationships.

Pupils have many opportunities to take on leadership responsibilities, which they take very seriously. These include, for example, librarians and school council or eco team members. They make an active contribution to the school and wider community.

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

The school's curriculum is broad and ambitious for all pupils. Pupils achieve well. There is a clear sequence for learning important knowledge, skills and vocabulary from Reception to Year 6. The provision for pupils with SEND is strong. The school identifies the needs of pupils accurately. Appropriate adaptations and skilled support ensure all pupils have equal opportunities to learn. In Reception, the curriculum links clearly to key stage 1 and beyond. Activities are very well organised. Children settle quickly and learn well. They develop curiosity, independence and resilience, which are attributes that effectively support their learning as they move through the school.

Teachers have secure knowledge about the subjects they teach. Pupils say that their lessons are fun and interesting. Teachers check pupils' understanding in lessons to inform their teaching and check any misconceptions. Information from checks on pupils' progress over time in the core subjects is used well. The school has correctly identified that this process is not as well developed in other subjects. In these areas, teachers do not have as much clarity about pupils' understanding of key knowledge over time in order to support pupils to retain that knowledge.

Reading has high priority in the school. The majority of pupils become confident, fluent readers. Reading for enjoyment is promoted with success. As soon as children start in Reception, they quickly learn the sounds that letters make through a well-structured and expertly delivered phonics programme. Staff provide extra support if anyone is at risk of falling behind so they catch up quickly. Books are carefully matched to the sounds pupils know in order to help them read with fluency. The school is working hard to enhance pupils' comprehension skills and has recently introduced an approach to support this. It is not yet fully embedded or consistent in all classes. Where it is most successful, there is excellent practice which could be shared more widely.

Pupils' behaviour is exemplary in lessons, around the school and at all social times, which are happy and joyful occasions. This was demonstrated exceptionally well by pupils' conduct during two days of indoor wet play and lunchtimes. Pupils are kind and respectful of adults and each other. They work together superbly well and listen to others' viewpoints even if they disagree with them. Pupils have a mature understanding and acceptance of the differences between pupils. Attendance is good as the school is a place where pupils want to come. One group of pupils agreed that 'every day is an adventure, and we always learn new things'.

The provision for pupils' broader development is excellent. The outdoor environment offers a range of opportunities, including the beach, and the forest school, created by the pupils. A wide range of clubs are offered. There are many trips and visitors to school to enrich the curriculum offer, as well as opportunities to learn to play musical instruments, such as the piano and the harp.

Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the school, the staff team and the leadership. There is a strong culture of mutual support and teamwork. Staff know that leaders are considerate of their workload and well-being. They feel highly valued, supported and proud to work at the school. Governors know the school very well and are deeply committed to the pupils, parents and staff. There is no complacency but a shared vision for constant improvement.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The recent approach to enhancing pupils' comprehension skills in key stage 2 is not yet consistently implemented in all classes. Consequently, pupils are not always learning these skills as well as they might. The school needs to carefully monitor the implementation to ensure that the best practice is more widely shared and that the high expectations are fully and consistently met.
- Assessment in the foundation subjects is not fully in place. As a result, teachers do not always have clarity in knowing how secure pupils are in their understanding of key knowledge or how well they can support pupils to retain that knowledge over time. The school needs to continue with its well-considered plans to develop assessment in the foundation subjects so that pupils can remember over time what they have been taught to help them build and learn new knowledge.

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 an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in July 2018.

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.

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' is used to mean pupils with SEND; pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	118679
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10296272
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	188
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Dr Sarah Montgomery
Headteacher	Matt Day
Website	www.lyminge.kent.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	17 and 18 July 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Since the previous inspection, there have been several changes in staffing and leadership. The headteacher was appointed in January 2021 and the deputy headteacher in September 2023.
- The school is a Church of England school in the Diocese of Canterbury. Its most recent section 48 inspection was in October 2019.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in this evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, the inclusion leader, subject leaders and many staff.

- The inspector met with governors and a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and computing. For each deep dive, the inspector held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspector also looked at curriculum information in some other subjects and visited a sample of reading lessons and spoke to older pupils about their reading.
- The inspector reviewed a range of documents, including the school's own evaluation of its effectiveness, priorities for improvement, external reviews and information relating to behaviour and attendance.
- The views of staff and pupils were gathered through both formal and informal discussions.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.

Inspection team

Margaret Coussins, 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 looked after children, 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 2023