

Inspection of an outstanding school: Adisham Church of England Primary School

The Street, Adisham, Canterbury, Kent CT3 3JW

Inspection dates:

29 November 2023

Outcome

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of outstanding as a result of this ungraded (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might not be as high if a graded (section 5) inspection were carried out now. The school's next inspection will be a graded inspection.

The headteacher of this school is Sophie Metcalf. This school is part of Stour Academy Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the Chief Executive Officer, Rachael Howell, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Fiona Trigwell.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy at this school. They thrive in this small village school. The school prioritises a strong sense of community. Pupils are excited to learn. They remember their learning. The school sets high expectations for every pupil to achieve. Those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are fully included in school life. Every pupil is treated as an individual. As a result, the majority of pupils achieve well.

Pupils feel safe. They have trusted adults they can talk to. They know adults will deal with any incidents of unkind behaviour. The school regularly reviews behaviour procedures to ensure they meet the needs of all pupils, particularly those with SEND.

Wider curriculum opportunities are carefully planned to enhance pupils' learning. Trips and visits are designed to reinforce different areas of the curriculum. Pupils are keen to represent their school in a variety of ways. They are proud to be on the school council. They understand the positive impact they can have on their community, for example, by raising money for the local community food bank.

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

The curriculum is ambitious and accessible for every pupil. The school, ably supported by the trust, has created an extensive programme of training for all staff. As a result, staff

have strong subject knowledge and are confident to teach the curriculum. The school uses technology effectively to enhance the curriculum. They adapt learning successfully for all learners. Pupils with SEND are supported expertly. This means that they are able to access the curriculum fully. The school checks what pupils know and remember effectively. They use this information to plan pupils' next steps and address any gaps in learning. This starts right from the early years where the learning environment enhances the curriculum. Pupils are engaged well in lessons. The school helps pupils to access and understand their learning.

Many pupils are enthusiastic about reading. They use the school library regularly and talk about the 'five-a-day' reading opportunities they are given to share books with adults. The school ensures children in the early years start learning phonics as quickly as possible. Staff are trained well. However, while a catch-up programme is in place to support the weakest readers, it is not effective enough. Some of these pupils are not learning to read as well as they could. As a result, they are not accessing the wider curriculum as successfully as they could be. The school needs to support these pupils to apply their phonics when they are reading. This will help them to develop their confidence and fluency.

The school has high expectations for pupils' behaviour. Pupils know what is expected of them. Where there is any off-task behaviour, staff are quick to address this. Pupils know what to do if they have concerns about unkind behaviour and are confident that it will be addressed. Overall, pupils attend regularly. The school is rightly focused on improving the most disadvantaged pupils' attendance. There is a robust strategy in place to identify and address lower attendance.

Pupils' personal development is woven throughout the curriculum. School staff know every pupil well. Each pupil is celebrated as an individual. Pupils work closely with their next year group in the mixed-age classes. As a result, they are well prepared for their next stage of learning. The school has prioritised the most disadvantaged pupils by providing opportunities to develop their talents and interests. For example, the Year 4 camping trip is provided free of charge to support every pupil to attend. More recently, the lunchtime sports coaches are supporting key pupils to develop specific skills alongside promoting positive behaviour at lunchtime.

Those responsible for governance know the school well. They challenge and support the school effectively. They carry out their statutory duties well. The school, alongside the trust, have carefully reviewed staff workload and well-being. Staff at all levels feel listened to and talk about the extensive support they receive. Staff have opportunities to work with other teachers and leaders in the trust. This has developed the expertise and skills they use in lessons. Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the school. They relish the sense of community that is fostered by the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The support for some weaker readers is not precise enough. This means that they are not always able to successfully read the books they are given. The school needs to ensure that these pupils are supported to develop their fluency and confidence and apply what they have learned when they are reading.

Background

When we have judged outstanding we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains outstanding. 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 outstanding in July 2017.

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 special educational needs and/or disabilities (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	141308
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10288045
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	102
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Fiona Trigwell
CEO of trust	Rachael Howell
Headteacher	Sophie Metcalf
Website	www.adisham.kent.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	4 and 5 July 2017, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- This is a smaller-than-average-sized primary school.
- This school is part of the Stour Academy Trust.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.
- This is a Church of England primary school. The last statutory inspection of Anglican and Methodist schools took place in 2019.
- This school runs its own breakfast and after-school club, which were part of this inspection.

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 inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and computing. For each deep dive, the inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The inspectors also heard pupils read to a member of staff.
- The inspectors met with leaders, staff, pupils and those with responsibility for governance, including the chair of the trust board. The inspectors also spoke with a representative of the diocese.
- The inspectors observed break and lunchtimes and the start and end of the school day.
- The inspectors scrutinised minutes of the trust board meetings.
- The inspectors met leaders to discuss the provision for pupils with SEND. They visited lessons to look at the support these pupils were receiving.
- The inspectors considered the responses to the confidential staff and pupil surveys. They took account of the responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, and parents' free-text comments.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: 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

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Ofsted Inspector

Margaret Coussins

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