

# Inspection of a good school: Wadhurst CofE Primary School and Nursery

Sparrows Green Road, Sparrow Green, Wadhurst, East Sussex TN5 6SR

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Inspection dates:

30 and 31 January 2024

## **Outcome**

Wadhurst CofE Primary School and Nursery continues to be a good school.

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

This is a school that sits at the heart of its community, where pupils are happy and settled. Pupils proudly talk about its inclusive and welcoming nature. They are well supported to learn and thrive in an environment characterised by warm, supportive relationships. They trust the adults in their school to look after them well. Staff have high expectations of pupils, both their conduct and their academic abilities, and pupils achieve well.

Pupils live out the school's values of being 'curious, confident and respectful'. They are keen to involve themselves in the life of the school, whether this is through winning 'Tidy the Turtle' for having the best-kept cloakroom area, or for the range of responsibilities they are proud to hold. Older pupils act as role models, with roles including play leaders, house captains, stargazers and members of the eco-team. A range of extra-curricular clubs capture pupils' interests, including a well-attended choir, a variety of sports clubs, pottery and 'STEM' club. Pupils from across the school engage with their school council, talking about the things they could do to, as one pupil explained, 'make things better for everyone'.

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

The school's curriculum is effectively sequenced across subjects, covering the important knowledge and skills that all pupils need to develop, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. These plans are mapped fully from Year 1 upwards, with considered connections and threads linking into the early years. As their early years provision has grown, leaders recognise that there is room for more specific building blocks that connect the early years and key stage 1 to be identified. This work continues to be developed to ensure that children have the most secure foundations for the next step of their education.

In lessons, staff have secure subject knowledge which they use effectively to explain and model knowledge to pupils. In many lessons, especially in reading and mathematics, regular checks are made by teachers about what pupils have understood so that misconceptions can be addressed and lessons can be adapted as necessary. However, this is not yet as consistent across foundation subjects and, as a result, the adaptations needed are not always as closely tailored to pupils' needs as they could be.

Reading is prioritised across the school, with frequent opportunities for reading and story time building effectively from the early years up through all ages of the school. The recently redeveloped library is also well used by pupils, who talk enthusiastically about the texts they access. Phonics lessons are well delivered, and teachers support pupils effectively to become increasingly fluent readers. In one-to-one reading with adults, however, pupils are not always as supported as precisely as they could be. The school recognises the need for all staff to have the required expertise to best support pupils in segmenting and blending words and is addressing this to ensure that pupils' progress in reading is stronger still.

Behaviour around the school site is calm and focused. In corridors, pupils move sensibly and with purpose, keen to get to lessons or to play. Lessons are similarly purposeful. A very small minority of pupils need additional support to meet the high expectations that staff have of their conduct. Through the school's effective and well-embedded approach to behaviour, all pupils are supported in reflecting on their behaviour and how it impacts on themselves and others. Those with additional educational needs are identified carefully by staff, and their provision is adapted well to ensure these pupils thrive, both in lessons and in the wider school.

The broader development of pupils in this school is strong. As well as the range of clubs and responsibilities, the school has a carefully considered programme to support the wider character of pupils in their care. Recent examples include the 'friendship week' and taking part in community craft projects with the local seniors. The school also recognises the need to expose pupils to a world beyond their immediate community and lived experience, and this includes being twinned with a school in Burundi, for which pupils have also raised funds.

Leaders are tireless in their efforts to develop the school. They are reflective and secure the buy-in of staff, while also ensuring their well-being is considered. They, alongside governors, carefully evaluate their actions to ensure they have the impact they want them to.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

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

- Assessment is not yet as well embedded across some foundation subjects. As a result,

staff do not always know how much knowledge pupils have remembered over time in these subjects or routinely use this information to inform the next steps of teaching. The school needs to ensure that all foundation subjects have a systematic approach to assessment so that pupils have clear understanding of their next steps and that teachers can make precise adaptations to their teaching to support all pupils in doing well.

- The school is working to redevelop its early years curriculum to encompass its growing provision. It needs to make sure that the curriculum fully prepares children for their next stage in Year 1, in order to secure the most robust foundations for future learning and support all pupils in doing well.

## 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 second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in December 2014.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	114532
<b>Local authority</b>	East Sussex
<b>Inspection number</b>	10296191
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	2 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	300
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Miquela Walsh
<b>Headteacher</b>	David Hemsley
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.wadhurstpri.e-sussex.sch.uk/esussex/primary/wadhurst">www.wadhurstpri.e-sussex.sch.uk/esussex/primary/wadhurst</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	12 September 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school currently uses no alternative provision.
- This Church of England school is part of the Diocese of Chichester. The last section 48 inspection took place in July 2023.
- The school caters for pupils from age two to 11, with pupils aged two to five in the on-site nursery provision.
- The school also has a separate early years provision for pupils from birth to two years based at the same site. This did not form 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 inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector held meetings with the headteacher, other leaders, teachers and pupils.

The inspector met with members of the governing body, including the chair of governors. The inspector also held a telephone conversation with a representative from the local authority and with a representative from the diocese.

- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and history. 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.
- 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.
- The inspector took account of a range of other information, including the school's development plans, school policies and governor minutes.
- The inspector spoke with pupils about their experience of the school. The inspector took account of parent and carer and staff views through conversations and responses to Ofsted's surveys.

### **Inspection team**

Marian Feeley, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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