

Inspection of a good school: Skinners' Kent Primary School

The Avenue, Knights Wood, Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN2 3GS

Inspection dates:

6 and 7 February 2024

Outcome

Skinners' Kent Primary School continues to be a good school.

The headteacher of this school is Gemma Wyatt. This school is part of Skinners' Academies Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The senior executive leader of the trust is Ian Anderson, and the trust is overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Johnny Aisher. There is also a trust partnership lead, Edward Wesson, who has responsibility for this school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils and their families feel valued and supported at Skinners' Kent Primary School. Pupils are known individually and cared for by staff and their peers alike. They learn about what it means to be a good school friend. Pupil 'play leaders' take responsibility for setting up playground games and activities. They notice if someone does not have a friend to play with and invite them to join in.

Older pupils take great pride in supporting younger pupils when they visit the library during their lunch and breaktimes. They help them to choose books or sit and read with them. The wide range of pupil roles within the school ensures that, over time, all pupils have the opportunity to take on additional responsibility and to build their confidence. The school values pupil voice, and pupils have helped to develop the school's club offer, with some clubs being run by pupils during lunch break. After-school clubs include dance club, cookery club and coding club.

The school has high expectations for all pupils. The approach to managing behaviour has recently been revised to ensure that every pupil develops the behaviours they need to be a successful learner. Pupils work hard to be 'ready, respectful and safe'. They enjoy their lessons and apply themselves to their learning and, as a result, achieve well.

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

Since the last inspection, the school has fully redesigned the curriculum to ensure that it is ambitious and well sequenced across subjects. As this new curriculum has been introduced, the school has rightly worked to develop teachers' subject knowledge and

confidence across the subjects they teach. In most subjects, therefore, teachers have strong subject expertise. However, because the school has carefully prioritised its work on the curriculum to take account of teachers' workload, work to develop teachers' subject knowledge in a small number of subjects is at an earlier stage. For example, while pupils have benefited from an increased whole-school focus on music this academic year and enjoy their regular music lessons, teachers do not always explain key learning as well as they might. This means that pupils do not achieve as well as they could. The school has clearly identified those subjects where teachers' subject knowledge is less developed and planned further training.

Teachers are knowledgeable about pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). They ensure that the curriculum is inclusive and adapted effectively to meet the needs of all pupils, including pupils with SEND and other disadvantaged pupils.

The school has introduced a new phonics programme to ensure that all pupils learn to read at an age-appropriate standard. The teaching of phonics is highly effective. Pupils practise reading and re-reading books regularly that match the sounds they have learned. Pupils who struggle to learn to read, including some pupils with SEND, are supported through effective catch-up sessions and have additional opportunities to develop their fluency. Teachers read aloud to children from early years onwards, which supports pupils to develop their understanding of books and their love of reading.

Pupils' broader development is carefully considered and planned for. The school ensures that pupils receive appropriate personal, social and health education (PSHE) that includes relationships and sex education. Pupils learn to keep themselves safe in their day-to-day lives, including online. The school carefully adapts the PSHE curriculum to take account of pupils' needs and experiences. Pupils spoke of the positive impact that pupil well-being and anti-bullying ambassadors have. They recognise that to tackle any bullying, it is vital for each member of the school community to be an 'upstander' rather than a bystander. Pupils were very clear about when they could talk to a pupil ambassador about a worry and when they would need to talk to a grown-up.

The school is very well led and managed. Leaders at all levels have a clear and precise understanding of what is working well, and what needs to be improved or adapted to ensure that pupils receive an excellent education. Staff are very positive about how they are supported to further develop their subject knowledge and teaching. Executive leaders within the multi-academy trust know the school very well and tailor the support they provide to the school accordingly. Those responsible for governance bring a broad range of expertise, which they use effectively to support and challenge school leaders.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a small number of subjects, teachers' subject knowledge is not as strong as it might be. Consequently, teachers do not always explain learning clearly or know how to help pupils most effectively when pupils struggle to understand. The school should continue to develop teachers' subject-specific expertise across the subjects that they teach so that pupils achieve highly.

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 September 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 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	141085
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10296404
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	210
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Johnny Aisher
Senior executive leader of the trust	Ian Anderson
Headteacher	Gemma Wyatt
Website	www.skps.org.uk
Dates of previous inspection	25 and 26 September 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of Skinners' Academies Trust. The trust is sponsored by The Skinners' Company. The senior executive officer of the trust was appointed in July 2023. He is currently employed by The Skinners Company and seconded to Skinners' Academies Trust.
- The chair of trustees was appointed in September 2023.
- 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 their evaluation of the school.

- The inspector met with the headteacher and the leadership team. The inspector met with representatives of the school's governing board, including the chair of governors, and spoke to a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and music. 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. Early years was included within all deep dives. The inspector discussed the curriculum for early years and some other subjects with leaders.
- The inspector considered pupils' behaviour and attitudes throughout the inspection and discussed the school's analysis of pupils' behaviour and attendance with leaders.
- The inspector considered personal development through all deep dives. They met with leaders to discuss the school's personal development programme, including the curriculum for PSHE and relationships education. The inspector talked to pupils about PSHE and other aspects of the school's personal development programme.
- 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

Alice Roberts, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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