

Inspection of Kings Hill School Primary and Nursery

Crispin Way, Kings Hill, West Malling, Kent ME19 4LS

Inspection dates: 20 and 21 February 2024

Overall effectiveness

Outstanding

The quality of education

Outstanding

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Outstanding

Early years provision

Outstanding

Previous inspection grade

Good

What is it like to attend this school?

This is an exceptional school and Nursery where pupils are truly 'inspired to believe, inspired to achieve', fulfilling the school's aspirational vision. Staff have a relentless ambition for all, from early years to Year 6. Expectations are consistently high and impressively met, with pupils achieving exceptionally well.

Leadership roles empower pupils to make a highly positive contribution to their school community. Reading champions find the best books for every reader, and well-being ambassadors promote positive mental health for everyone. Behaviour is excellent. Relationships are joyful, compassionate and respectful. Everyone feels safe and special. Staff are role models, helping pupils to shine through school values, including courage, cooperation and resilience.

Pupils are encouraged to appreciate different experiences. They are inspired when studying faiths and cultures in the curriculum, and during special events such as 'Diversity Week', when pupils welcome a range of special visitors. Talents and interests are constantly enhanced through rich opportunities. From archaeology to go karting, there are clubs for everyone. Expert tennis and football coaches enrich physical education, and pupils frequently represent the school at events. One parent represented many when commenting, 'this is a school that truly cares and helps children to reach their full potential'.

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

Children make a stunning start in Nursery and Reception, where staff provide impressive care to help children settle brilliantly. Transition is strong, helping families to instantly feel part of the school. Staff constantly model expert communication, using high-quality interactions to help children work and play together. Children show sustained engagement, high concentration and awareness of the feelings of others. They achieve highly, preparing them superbly for next steps and future learning.

The curriculum is meticulously planned with precise knowledge and rich experiences for academic and personal development. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) benefit particularly well. Staff work with leaders to identify any additional needs, and meaningful adaptations and support are immediately put in place. Teachers' subject knowledge is excellent because of constant training. Staff check pupils' understanding and swiftly address any misconceptions. Pupils produce work of high quality across all subjects. They excel and develop into confident writers, mathematicians, artists, historians and linguists. Subjects including modern foreign languages are highly regarded and deeply embedded. All pupils, including those with SEND, flourish as a result of rich and broad learning opportunities.

The reading curriculum has been superbly developed. Children progress from impressive language skills in Nursery to complex reading analysis by Year 6. The library is the heart of the school, and loved by all. Books are diverse with something

for everyone. Reading is top priority with positive engagement from pupils, parents and staff. Expertise across the team ensures high-quality phonics practice across the school. All staff model the strategies of the programme with expertise. Books are consistently well-matched to the sounds pupils have learned which develops accuracy and confidence. Catch-up sessions are highly effective to ensure that nobody falls behind. Year 1 phonics attainment continued to be exceptional in 2023. Pupils learn to read with fluency and enthusiasm and achieved significantly above national averages in both key stages 1 and 2.

Behaviour is excellent. If pupils need help to regulate their emotions, guidance is swift and supportive. Expectations are exemplary and met; pupils conduct themselves impeccably around the school. The school works positively with families to ensure high attendance. Disadvantaged pupils' attendance, including those with SEND, is higher than the national average.

Pupils' character development is impressive. From early years onwards, staff celebrate pupils for demonstrating school values such as courage and resilience. Pupils requested a quiet retreat for breaktimes and worked with leaders to plan and fundraise for the 'Calm Cottage'. 'Playdate' and 'young carers' clubs show exceptional compassion and innovation by the school. Staff constantly seek to improve life experiences for all, which especially benefits disadvantaged pupils. School dogs provide cuddles for everyone, and pupils are thrilled to work with them. Residential trips, educational visits and community projects ensure that pupils thrive from rich opportunities.

Staff are empowered, happy and proud. Training opportunities are superb. Expertise is shared across the school, and with other settings. Parents hold the school in high regard, saying it is 'the heart of the community'. Governors demonstrate a wealth of knowledge and insight. They offer highly effective support and challenge, meeting duties with diligence. During changes in leadership, governors and leaders sustained excellent standards by maintaining strong values and practice. Leaders are inspirational, reflective and dedicated, achieving their aim to make every minute matter for pupils in this outstanding school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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	130952
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10296340
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	485
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Heather Ward-Russell
Headteacher	Lottie Barnden
Website	www.kingshillschool.org.uk
Dates of previous inspection	7 and 8 December 2022, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The headteacher started their post in January 2024.
- The school currently does not use any alternative providers.
- The school offers a before- and after-school club, managed by the governing body.
- There is a Nursery for two- and three-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.
- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors met with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, assistant headteachers, special educational needs co-ordinator, subject leaders, early years leader, teachers and support staff.
- The lead inspector met with six governors, including the chair of governors.
- The lead inspector spoke by telephone with a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, art and design, history and modern foreign languages. For deep dives, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The lead inspector listened to a range of pupils read. The inspector observed catch up interventions to learn how staff provide extra support to pupils.
- 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.
- Inspectors considered the responses to the staff survey and spoke to a range of staff about their views of the school.
- Inspectors evaluated responses to the pupil survey and spoke with pupils during lessons and break times.
- Inspectors spoke to a sample of parents and took account of their responses to Ofsted Parent View questionnaire and free-text responses.

Inspection team

Scott Reece, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Louise Lythgoe	Ofsted Inspector
Giles Osborne	Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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