

# Inspection of Harrietsham Church of England Primary School

West Street, Harrietsham, Maidstone, Kent ME17 1JZ

---

Inspection dates: 20 and 21 February 2024

**Overall effectiveness** **Good**

---

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Early years provision **Good**

Previous inspection grade Good

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

Pupils describe the school as a 'gigantic family'. This gives them a sense of belonging and security. The school has expanded pupil numbers recently. However, pupils and adults appreciate how the school has maintained a 'small school feel'. Pupils and staff enjoy warm and positive relationships.

The school has clear expectations for pupils' achievement. The school has undergone a leadership transition, but high ambition for behaviour and learning has been maintained. Pupils believe in these expectations and work to 'be their true selves and do their best'. From Reception onwards, pupils take pride in their learning and achieve well.

The school is inclusive and teaches pupils to appreciate differences. They learn about different faiths, cultures, and abilities, which ensures that everyone feels welcome in the school. As a result, pupils, including those who are disadvantaged and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), feel included and actively participate in the school community. This creates a harmonious and welcoming environment. Pupils are confident they can speak to someone about any worries they may have and know these will be addressed promptly.

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

The school has designed an interesting curriculum that reflects its increasingly diverse community. This is well considered from Year 1 onwards and contains the precise knowledge and skills that staff intend pupils to learn. For example, in geography, there is a well-defined progression of fieldwork skills. Younger pupils learn about simple locations within the school and what this looks like on maps. Throughout each year group, pupils gradually build their understanding so that, by the end of Year 6, pupils use scaled maps, mapping symbols and coordinates with confidence and accuracy. In Reception, the curriculum beyond mathematics and reading is in place but is less precisely defined.

The school has considered what pupils will learn and in what order. Staff follow the planning closely to help pupils to deepen knowledge gradually over time. They use a consistent approach, which supports pupils to learn the curriculum. For example, teachers recap previous learning to help pupils to connect new learning over time. Staff identify pupils who may have additional needs and adapt their teaching to support these pupils well. Pupils, including those with SEND, are proud of their achievements and keen to explain what they have learned. Pupils can recall learning over time confidently, which means they are well prepared for the next stage of education. Pupils' achievement in published test results matches the national average. Those who are disadvantaged achieve equally positively.

Pupils behave well. They told inspectors they trust adults in school to 'listen and speak to us respectfully and never shout.' This was strongly felt in the school's Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities, who feel celebrated and understood by the

school. From Reception onwards, consistent routines and high expectations are evident in lessons. Pupils across the school can articulate thoughts and feelings to peers and adults using language they have been taught to express themselves and to mediate disagreements. Playtimes are cheerful and kind spaces, and pupils interact positively. Attitudes to learning are universally positive and reflected in pupils' good punctuality. The school has improved pupils' overall attendance; however, some groups have not fully benefitted from the school's efforts. Consequently, some pupils miss school too often, leaving gaps in their learning.

The school is committed to developing pupils into well-rounded modern citizens. It prioritises broadening the horizons of all pupils, especially those who are most disadvantaged. Staff use exciting opportunities to develop pupils' character, such as music events at the Royal Albert Hall and work with the community through the courageous advocacy programme. Pupils are supported to understand and live out the school values of love, forgiveness, and fellowship. This creates a nurturing and welcoming school for all. As one pupil reflected, 'Our school is a kind place that welcomes everyone'.

Leaders at all levels are committed to the school's future. There has been a period of leadership transition at the school, but governors have maintained consistency throughout this period. Alongside fulfilling their statutory duties, they have continued to challenge the school to ensure that the provision continues to improve. Interim leaders have provided effective professional development to help all staff support individual pupils. This is reflected in one parent's comment, 'My children feel listened to, but also challenged to do their best.' Staff, parents and pupils all highly recommend 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)**

- Some pupils who are disadvantaged do not attend regularly enough. These pupils are missing important learning and developing gaps in their understanding. The school must redouble its efforts to work with families to improve attendance for all pupils.
- In Reception, the curriculum outside of reading and mathematics needs refining. On occasion, the most important content is not precisely defined, so staff are not consistently clear about the most important knowledge and skills to emphasise. The school must accurately set out and sequence what it intends children to know and remember across all areas.

## 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>	118622
<b>Local authority</b>	Kent
<b>Inspection number</b>	10296269
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	370
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of the governing body</b>	Jo Greasley
<b>Headteacher</b>	Tara Deevoy
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.harrietsham.kent.sch.uk">www.harrietsham.kent.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	12 June 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.
- The school is part of the Diocese of Canterbury.
- The most recent Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools was in January 2024.

## 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.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- The inspection team met with the headteacher, senior leaders, teachers and pupils. The lead inspector met with members of the governing body, including the chair of governors, and representatives of the local authority and diocese.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, geography, mathematics, music and physical education. For each deep dive, inspectors 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 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.
- The inspection team observed behaviour in lessons and at breaktimes and lunchtimes. Inspectors spoke formally with groups of pupils, as well as talking to pupils in lessons and around the school.
- Inspectors spoke with parents at the start of the school day. They considered the views expressed in Ofsted Parent View.
- Inspectors spoke with groups of staff and considered the responses to Ofsted's staff survey.

### **Inspection team**

Toby Martlew, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Venessa McInnes

Ofsted Inspector

Claire Martin-O'Donoghue

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 children looked after, 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](mailto: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/](http://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](mailto: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](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)

© Crown copyright 2024