

Inspection of White Cliffs Primary and Nursery School

St Radigund's Road, Dover, Kent CT17 0LB

Inspection dates: 8 and 9 May 2024

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| Overall effectiveness | Good |
| The quality of education | Good |
| Behaviour and attitudes | Good |
| Personal development | Good |
| Leadership and management | Good |
| Early years provision | Outstanding |
| Previous inspection grade | Good |

The headteacher of this school is Helen Castle. This school is part of the Samphire Star Education Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, David Meades, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Ryan Davies.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils develop high aspirations at this caring school. They learn how to express their opinions confidently and know that staff will listen to them. Teachers encourage pupils to have high ambitions and help them to meet them. Staff teach pupils important skills, such as resilience, well. This helps pupils to challenge themselves and achieve their goals. Pupils feel happy and safe. They feel confident to raise any concerns they may have with trusted adults and know that staff will address them quickly.

Teachers have high expectations of pupils. Pupils live up to these, behaving well throughout the school. Pupils have strong attitudes to learning, concentrating well and listening to teachers' instructions carefully. Pupils enjoy the engaging activities that teachers design and discuss them enthusiastically.

Pupils enjoy a range of well-designed and inspiring activities that enrich their school life. They develop leadership skills as part of the active school council. Pupils also improve the school environment as 'eco-warriors'. Leaders ensure that all pupils take part in exciting enrichment experiences. These include a talk from an Olympic athlete, or Year 6 taking a theatre trip to London. Pupils enjoy these opportunities and value the experiences highly.

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

The school has designed an ambitious curriculum. Staff know pupils well and have matched learning to meet their needs. Leaders have designed the early years curriculum with precision. This ensures that pupils get a very strong start. Children in early years quickly learn the important knowledge and skills that they will require.

Leaders identify the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) accurately. Teachers plan a range of interventions and support for these pupils. As a result, pupils with SEND achieve well. They learn important knowledge and skills in line with their needs and starting points.

Teachers have sound subject knowledge. They explain learning clearly. Teachers plan exciting activities that help pupils remember their prior learning well. For example, pupils use their knowledge of shapes from early years to solve geometry problems in key stage 1. Pupils use the vocabulary they learn confidently.

The school has prioritised pupils' oracy. Pupils have regular opportunities to deepen their learning through discussion. This is particularly strong in early years. For instance, staff encouraged pupils to use their mathematics knowledge to calculate prices that would be charged in a toy car wash that they had made.

Teachers' checks of pupils' knowledge are not always effective. In subjects such as reading, staff use checks to identify gaps in learning accurately. However, in some wider curriculum subjects, pupils' knowledge is not checked carefully enough. As a

result, gaps in knowledge are not identified consistently well. This means that some pupils do not remember the important knowledge they learn well enough.

The majority of pupils achieve well. They are proud of the high-quality work they produce. Teachers prepare pupils for their next steps successfully. Pupils have age-appropriate skills in reading and mathematics. Pupils also have high levels of resilience that help them to learn effectively.

Leaders have worked hard to improve standards in reading after previous low national test results in key stage 2. They now ensure that children learn to read, from the start of Reception, with increasing fluency and confidence. Children in Reception Year quickly learn the important sounds and letters they need. Teachers ensure that those who do not keep up with learning phonics receive excellent support, closely matched to their needs. Pupils discuss the books they love in 'book banter' session. Leaders ensure that there is a strong culture of reading across the school and this helps to stimulate pupils' love of literature.

The school is friendly and welcoming. Pupils begin to learn the school's rules and routines in nursery. By the time children reach Reception, they conduct themselves extremely well and pupils' conduct throughout the year groups is excellent. Pupils' attendance is improving quickly. Leaders analyse this carefully and plan a range of support for families that need extra support.

Leaders have prioritised pupils' personal development. Teachers plan activities to broaden pupils' understanding of world cultures thoughtfully. Pupils celebrate the range of beliefs and enjoy a number of opportunities to develop their skills and talents. Pupils participate in the broad range of enrichment activities and many proudly represent the school. Well-planned activities at social times nurture children's skills and interests very well.

Staff are very proud to work at the school. They benefit from the high-quality training that leaders provide for them. Trustees hold leaders to account well.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some wider curriculum subjects, teachers do not assess pupils' understanding well enough. As a result, teachers do not identify gaps in learning quickly and some pupils do not learn all the important information and skills they require. Leaders must ensure that assessment helps teachers to quickly identify gaps in learning and design activities that ensure that pupils learn well in all subjects.

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

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| Unique reference number | 138168 |
| Local authority | Kent |
| Inspection number | 10321953 |
| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Academy converter |
| Age range of pupils | 2 to 11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 288 |
| Appropriate authority | Board of trustees |
| Chair of trust | Ryan Davies |
| Headteacher | Helen Castle |
| Website | www.whitecliffsprimary.com |
| Date of previous inspection | 8 January 2019 |

Information about this school

- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- The school manages breakfast and after-school clubs for pupils.

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 the school's education provision.
- This is the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The lead inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspection team met with the headteacher as well as with other leaders and staff. The lead inspector also held meetings with trustees including the chair of trustees.
- The inspection team carried out deep dives in the following subjects: reading, mathematics, physical education, history 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.

- The lead inspector considered the views of parents and carers through their responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View. The inspectors spoke to staff and pupils during the inspection and took account of staff responses to Ofsted's online staff survey.
- 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

| | |
|--------------|-------------------------|
| Gavin Thomas | His Majesty's Inspector |
| Adnan Ahmet | Ofsted Inspector |
| Oliver Allen | Ofsted Inspector |

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