

Inspection of Ilfracombe Church of England Junior School

Princess Avenue, Ilfracombe, Devon EX34 9LW

Inspection dates:	24 and 25 September 2024
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Previous inspection grade	Good

What is it like to attend this school?

'Thriving together' is at the heart of this school. Pupils develop highly positive attitudes to learning, which stand them in good stead for the next stage. This is because the school strives to give pupils the opportunities and skills that they need to be confident and active members of the communities in which they live.

When the youngest pupils join in Year 3, they quickly learn to meet the high expectations that the staff have of them in their learning and their conduct. They see this modelled successfully by the older pupils and staff. Pupils become increasingly respectful, caring and thoughtful individuals during their time at the school. This is evident in the strong and nurturing relationships that are in place between staff and pupils.

Many pupils face barriers to learning. This can be in the form of special educational needs and or disabilities (SEND), as well as other challenges. Pupils' needs are identified quickly and accurately. Pupils trust staff and feel safe at school. As a result, they persevere to give their best efforts. Attendance is improving because pupils want to be in school. The school is viewed as 'a sanctuary' for its pupils. This is bolstered further by the enthusiasm that pupils have for their learning across the curriculum.

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

The school has a clear and ambitious vision and set of values. These are successfully shared and well understood. These values and vision result in a highly inclusive school. The school has embedded an ambitious curriculum that increasingly successfully meets the needs of its pupils. The curriculum is designed to address the low starting points of many of the pupils when they join in Year 3. The curriculum focuses on helping pupils catch up to their expected levels as they move through the school. Disadvantaged pupils, including pupils with SEND, quickly gain the confidence and resilience needed to tackle challenges and develop their skills. The school's two specially resourced provisions for pupils with SEND and the mainstream classes benefit from the knowledge and expertise of the staff.

The school has continued to strengthen the curriculum in response to low published outcomes. It has thought carefully about what pupils need to know and understand. This required a focus on securing fundamental learning, such as number fluency and phonics. As a result, pupils now build new learning with increasing success. The school has prioritised reading and most pupils become fluent and confident readers. The school gives pupils a rich set of experiences through trips and visits as well as the diverse, high-quality texts that are planned into each subject. Published outcomes do not yet reflect the difference this work is having on how well pupils learn across the curriculum.

The impact of the school's work is firmly rooted in the exceptional way that it prioritises pupils' social and emotional needs from the time that they start at the school. It makes an impressive impact on pupils' attitudes to learning and the way in which they behave. However, in some aspects of its monitoring, the school does not analyse information with enough precision. It does not gain important information about patterns and trends over

time, to support the information it already holds at an individual, pupil level, for example information about different pupil groups' attendance and access to the school's full enrichment offer.

Pupils value the roles of responsibility that they hold. This enables them to support their peers and strengthens their own preparation for the next stage. The school recognises the importance of equipping pupils with the strategies and resilience that will give them the best possible chances. Developments such as the 'character curriculum' and the high priority given to pupils' mental and physical health are well-embedded aspects of this wider offer.

Governors know the school well. They provide the necessary challenge and support to assure themselves about the quality of education the school provides. The school is actively involved in, and leading on, work that other professionals seek as examples of good practice. This ensures the continual development of staff expertise in the school. This collaborative work is valued by staff and recognised by parents and carers for the difference it makes to their children's education.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The impact of the quality of education is not fully reflected in the school's published outcomes. This means that pupils' academic achievements are not always accurate and aligned with the knowledge and understanding that they have. The school should continue to review and refine the curriculum, informed by its accurate evaluations and research, so that this is better reflected in pupils' academic outcomes.
- At times, the school does not underpin what it knows about the impact it makes on pupils with enough precision. As a result, it does not always have a fully formed analysis of patterns and trends over time to show the difference that its actions and decisions make. The school should strengthen the wealth of information it gathers on the impact it makes, with increased precision.

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	113381
Local authority	Devon
Inspection number	10344480
Type of school	Junior
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	7 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	369
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Deborah Callaghan
Headteacher	Jody Le Bredonchel
Website	www.ilfracombe-jun.devon.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	2 and 3 April 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school has a higher-than-average number of pupils with SEND and disadvantaged pupils.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- The school has a local authority funded provision to support pupils from across North Devon with SEND, particularly in social, emotional and mental health and in speech, language and communication.
- The school has its own specially resourced provision.
- The school is designated as having a religious character. The school is in the Diocese of Exeter.
- The previous section 48 inspection took place in February 2023. The school's next section 48 inspection is due to take place in 2028.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth form provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024 will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- 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.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, the three assistant headteachers, the school business manager, the designated safeguarding lead and subject leaders. In addition, an inspector met with members of the governing body, including the chair, a representative of the diocese and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics, art and design, music and religious education (the school refers to this as religion and world views). For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers and pupils and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- An inspector listened to a sample of pupils reading to a familiar adult.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, 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 observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school site.
- Inspectors analysed school documentation, including leaders' evaluations and plans for improvement. Inspectors scrutinised a range of policies and procedures, including those that relate to the curriculum, SEND, safeguarding and behaviour.
- An inspector listened to the views of parents at the beginning of the first day of the inspection. Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted Parent View and the free-text comments.
- Inspectors spoke with staff to gather their views on the school.
- Inspectors evaluated responses to Ofsted's pupil survey.

Inspection team

Leanne Thirlby, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Julie Barton

Ofsted Inspector

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