

# Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: St Nicolas & St Mary C of E Primary School

Eastern Avenue, Shoreham-by-Sea, West Sussex BN43 6PE

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Inspection dates:

4 and 5 December 2024

## **Outcome**

St Nicolas & St Mary C of E Primary School has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

The headteacher of this school is Andrew Lincoln. This school is part of the Diocese of Chichester Academy Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Mark Talbot, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Luke Irvine-Capel.

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

Pupils enjoy coming to school, where they are happy and well-cared for. The wide range of leadership roles allow them to contribute well to school life. They have a genuine voice in school decision-making. Pupils on the school council are proud of the way they represent their peers. For example, their views informed the design and naming of the new 'tropical climber'. Many pupils participate in the impressive range of after-school clubs. These are inclusive, as well as nurturing of pupils' talents and interests.

The school sets high expectations for pupils' academic outcomes and behaviour. Pupils achieve highly with their learning and in many areas they excel. They are well prepared for their next educational steps. Pupils behave well and are attentive learners. They live up to the school's 'rainbow rules' in the way they show respect to each other and are kind and helpful.

Pupils have an appreciation of cultural diversity and difference. The long-established links with schools in Ethiopia and France give them an understanding about life in other countries and how they compare to their own experiences. They support the school in

Ethiopia with their fundraising activities. Older pupils write to their pen-pals in France, showcasing their learning from their French lessons.

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

The strong reading culture is the bedrock of the school. Pupils become extremely confident and skilled readers. Staff across the school are confident in teaching phonics. Their strong subject knowledge ensures that lessons are sharply focused on learning how to read accurately. A love of reading permeates through the whole school. This starts with the youngest children in early years, who enjoy their story times and comfortable reading areas. Across the school, books and text extracts are chosen with care, which means that pupils experience a broad range of genres. They are motivated by their reading rewards and the associated celebrations. Families appreciate the 'reading trolley', which allows them to choose books to share at home with their children.

The school is determined to translate the strength in reading to other subjects across the school. Their work has been highly effective across much of the curriculum, particularly in mathematics. Pupils are successful with their mathematics learning, and many achieve highly. This is because they have time to practise their methods and strategies and then apply them, for example in mathematical problem-solving and reasoning. Recent changes to the English curriculum are already showing a positive impact in terms of pupils' writing. Pupils are ambitious in their vocabulary choices and adjust their language to the intended audience. However, sometimes pupils do not use appropriate grammar or punctuation in their writing.

Pupils remember their learning well. This is because lessons routinely include recaps of previous learning. Reflection times and discussions at the end of topics serve many purposes. Pupils draw their learning together by completing flashbacks, quizzes, and checks to successfully demonstrate their understanding. Teachers use this information, alongside their strong questioning, to address any misconceptions and evaluate the effectiveness of the curriculum on pupils' learning. Pupils have impressive recall of their recent learning and learning from longer ago. For example, older pupils have in-depth knowledge from their history learning about civil rights and Martin Luther King Junior.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are accurately identified and given the support they need to access the full curriculum. Those who need extra help with their learning or in regulating their emotions are supported well. Pupils' targets, and the support in place to help them achieve them, are routinely shared with their parents and carers. The school appropriately seeks advice and uses expertise from external agencies and partners.

The school's wider offer benefits pupils' personal development. They enjoy their interactions with community groups, such as local care homes, where they share their learning or entertain residents with Christmas singing. The school is rich with musical opportunities. Whole-school singing is a time of shared joy and pride. For example, the members of the school choir are delighted to have recorded a favourite Christmas song for a local radio station.

Staff enjoy working at the school and morale is high. They enthuse about their training and development opportunities. The school's work to develop and empower subject leaders is highly evident in the impact of their work across the curriculum. The governing body, diocese and the incoming trust have established strong relationships, allowing for an accurate shared understanding of the school's strengths and areas being further developed.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- When writing, pupils do not always use appropriate punctuation or grammatical structure. This means that their writing is not as effective as it could be. The school should continue with its work to embed curriculum improvement to ensure that pupils write well in English and across all subjects.

## **Background**

Until September 2024, on a graded (section 5) inspection we gave schools an overall effectiveness grade, in addition to the key and provision judgements. Overall effectiveness grades given before September 2024 will continue to be visible on school inspection reports and on Ofsted's website. From September 2024, graded inspections will not include an overall effectiveness grade. This school was, before September 2024, judged to be good for its overall effectiveness.

We have now inspected the school to determine whether it has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at that previous inspection. 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's work has improved significantly or that it may not be as strong as it was at the last inspection, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection. A graded inspection 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 second ungraded inspection since we judged the predecessor school, St Nicolas & St Mary C of E (Aided) Primary School, to be good for overall effectiveness in June 2013.

## **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>	149006
<b>Local authority</b>	West Sussex
<b>Inspection number</b>	10341918
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	2 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	393
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Luke Irvine-Capel
<b>CEO of the trust</b>	Mark Talbot
<b>Headteacher</b>	Andrew Lincoln
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.stnicolasmary.w-sussex.sch.uk">www.stnicolasmary.w-sussex.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- The school has a nursery, which includes provision for two-year-olds.
- The school currently uses one registered alternative provider.
- The school is a Church of England primary school. The last section 48 inspection took place in October 2024. The next inspection is likely to take place in 2029.
- The school has recently joined the Diocese of Chichester Academy Trust. It was previously part of the Bishop Otter Academy Trust.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation 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 this evaluation of the school.

- The inspector met with school leaders and representatives from the diocese, governing body and the trust.
- The inspector visited a sample of lessons, spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- 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.
- The inspector evaluated responses to Ofsted's pupil survey and spoke to pupils to gather their views.
- The inspector analysed responses to the staff survey and spoke to staff about their views of the school.
- The inspector took account of the responses to the Ofsted Parent View questionnaire and the additional free-text responses. The inspector also spoke with parents at the start of the second day of the inspection.

### **Inspection team**

Kate Fripp, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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