

Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: St Peter's CofE Primary School

Holmans, Street Lane, Ardingly, Haywards Heath, West Sussex RH17 6UQ

Inspection date:

17 December 2024

Outcome

St Peter's CofE Primary School has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

This small, rural school provides a caring and supportive environment, where all pupils can flourish. Pupils are happy and feel safe. Pupils relish the opportunity to talk about their learning. Visitors are welcomed warmly. Pupils celebrate each other's achievements and understand each other's different strengths and needs.

The school's vision of 'achieve, believe, create' underpins learning. Pupils understand what this means to them individually. Lessons are calm and purposeful. Pupils work hard and concentrate on the task in hand. The school has high expectations for all pupils, and these are largely realised. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) access the same ambitious curriculum as their peers and achieve well.

Pupil's conduct is excellent. The 'golden key' to behaviour helps pupils make sensible choices. Pupils understand the difference between right and wrong. Breaktimes and lunchtimes are purposeful. Pupils actively participate in a wide range of activities, such as ten-pin bowling on the playground. The vibrant library, at the centre of the school, is a focus. Here, older pupils teach younger pupils how to improve their reading skills. Flapjack, the school dog, provides welcome support to some. She helps pupils learn vital life-skills, such as taking responsibility and safety around animals.

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

The school has designed a broad and ambitious curriculum. The curriculum in Reception helps children get off to the best possible start. The learning environment is vibrant and inviting. Expert staff identify where specialist support is required, particularly for pupils with SEND.

Subject leaders are knowledgeable and skilled. In lessons, teachers skilfully adapt the curriculum to assist pupils' learning where needed. Some pupils access individual catch-up lessons, but only where this is necessary. The school is adept at identifying pupils' misconceptions in core subjects, such as English and mathematics. In these subjects, teachers provide effective feedback. Older pupils learn how to identify and correct their own mistakes. In the wider curriculum, the school's work to check what pupils know and can do is still in its infancy. This means that sometimes teachers do not check that pupils have secured essential knowledge and skills before they move on.

Reading is at the heart of the curriculum. From the moment children join Reception, the school has a sharp focus on communication and language. Well-trained staff teach phonics expertly. Pupils say they love reading and speak enthusiastically about their favourite books and authors. Pupils learn to become confident and fluent readers. Expert staff help pupils who have fallen behind, in reading or mathematics, to catch up and keep up. Staff capitalise on every opportunity to help pupils develop strong foundations in reading, counting and mathematical processes.

Attendance remains a high priority for the school. When absence is a concern, the school gives appropriate support and challenge. Pupils' behaviour is respectful and calm. Pupils hold the door for visitors, they greet each other and the staff warmly. A small number of pupils occasionally exhibit more challenging behaviour. Staff support these pupils calmly and effectively.

The provision for pupils' broader development is a strength. The school offers a multitude of opportunities to develop skills and talents beyond the curriculum. Pupils relish learning musical instruments. Many pupils attend the popular sports clubs, and a growing number of pupils represent the school in local competitions. The school prepares pupils to become responsible, respectful and active citizens in several ways. Pupils learn vital leadership skills by serving on the eco-council, the school council, working as librarians and joining the sports crew. The school ensures that all pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, benefit from participating in the enriching activities on offer. For example, some pupils visited London as part of their 'life changing moments' topic. Pupils learn age-appropriate relationship education. Overall, pupils are well prepared for the next steps in their education.

The school is well led and managed. Effective systems are in place to enable leaders to accurately identify the strengths of the school. They have a sharp focus on where further improvement is still required. The school acts swiftly to address any areas that require attention. Recent appointments to subject leadership have strengthened the delivery of the curriculum. Governance is a strength. Governors know the school well and provide support and appropriate challenge where needed.

Staff feel that leaders, including governors, care about their well-being. Staff value the opportunities given to them for professional development. They know that any improvements to the school are carefully implemented to support their workload. Parents and carers speak highly of the school. One parent, typical of many, told inspectors, 'My children have flourished here.'

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school's work to improve assessment processes in wider foundation subjects is in its infancy and not yet complete. This means that checks on pupils' learning in these subjects are not as effective as they could be. The school should ensure that all staff have the skills and knowledge required to identify and support gaps and misconceptions in pupils' learning in wider curriculum 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 first ungraded inspection since we judged school to be good for overall effectiveness in July 2019.

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	126005
Local authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	10341623
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	103
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Kathryn James
Headteacher	Jamie Savage (Executive headteacher) Gemma Hall (Head of school)
Website	www.st-peters-sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	2 and 3 July 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Since the previous inspection, there have been some changes to the leadership of the school. The previous headteacher took up his post as executive headteacher and a new head of school joined the school in September 2023.
- The school does not currently use any registered alternative provision.

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 inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspectors met with the executive headteacher and head of school, other senior staff, including the special educational needs coordinator.

- The lead inspector met with the chair of the governing body and some governors. She held a telephone meeting with a representative of the local authority and the diocese.
- Inspectors visited a sample of lessons, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The inspectors looked at samples of pupils' work to consider the school's work to support disadvantaged pupils.
- The inspectors spoke with groups of pupils and observed their behaviour at break and lunchtime. They also took into consideration the online pupil surveys.
- 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 inspectors took account of a range of other information, including the school's own self-evaluation, the school's improvement plan, school policies and minutes from meetings of the governing body.
- Inspectors met with groups of staff and considered the opinions expressed through the staff survey.
- The inspectors took account of the views expressed through the online survey, Ofsted Parent View and spoke to some parents at the start of the day.

Inspection team

Linda Culling, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Cathy Reid

Ofsted Inspector

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