

Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: Iford and Kingston Church of England Primary School

Wellgreen Lane, Kingston, Lewes, East Sussex BN7 3NR

Inspection dates:

10 and 11 December 2024

Outcome

Iford and Kingston Church of England Primary School has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy attending their warm and nurturing village school. All children are welcomed into Reception by their Year 6 buddies. Across the school, pupils socialise and make friends within and beyond their own year groups. Pupils told the inspector that their school was special because 'Everyone plays with everyone'.

Since becoming part of the Skylark Federation, the school has re-established high expectations for every pupil. Older pupils, in particular, have very positive attitudes to learning. They work hard and achieve well. The school provides a safe and positive environment for all pupils. Pupils treat each other with respect and kindness. Classrooms are settled and calm. Lunchtimes can sometimes be a little less settled, but the school is working to address this. The school provides sensible and effective support to any pupil who struggles to manage their behaviour.

Pupils benefit from the wide range of trips, visits and experiences the school provides. Pupils talked enthusiastically of recent trips to local cultural and historic sites. They also enjoy regular walks on the South Downs. A wide club offer, including choir, orchestra and coding club, enables all pupils to pursue their talents and interests.

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

The school joined the Skylark Federation of schools in September 2023. Prior to this, standards at the school had declined. With a new leadership team in post, the school has worked to address this decline and strengthen all areas of performance. Support from

within the federation has enabled the school to quickly introduce a new curriculum. School and federation leaders have supported teachers to develop their subject knowledge across the subjects they teach. This support has enabled staff to deliver the curriculum more effectively. This work is ongoing. The school recognises that in some subjects, the curriculum is not taught consistently well in all year groups.

The school has prioritised reading. It has a clear approach to teaching phonics, right from the start of Reception. Children frequently read to an adult using books that match the sounds they have learned. Staff regularly read aloud to pupils of all ages, and the school has carefully considered the books that are available to pupils in classrooms and in the well-stocked school library. Older pupils have very positive attitudes to reading and appreciate the wide range of books available to them at school.

In English, the curriculum needs further refining to ensure that for younger pupils, it focuses on the foundational knowledge and skills that pupils need. At present, younger children are asked to undertake writing tasks that are too complex, when they have not, for example, learned how to form letters correctly or write simple sentences. As a result, some younger pupils do not achieve as well in English as they might.

Prior to joining the federation, the school had lacked consistent leadership of provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). This means that some pupils have not received effective support over time and have not achieved as well as they might have. The school has improved leadership in this area. It is working to strengthen SEND provision overall. However, it knows there is more to do.

The school has a strong programme for personal development, which pupils and parents alike appreciate. The school have introduced a clear curriculum for personal, social and health education, as well as for relationships and sex education. Pupils learn about healthy relationships and staying safe. Older pupils speak confidently about the protected characteristics.

Pupils generally behave well, and learning is rarely disrupted. However, not all parents are confident in the school's approach to behaviour. The school plans to work more closely with parents to improve this. Most pupils attend well. The school carefully monitors the attendance of a small number of pupils who attend less well and works closely with the local authority when pupils and families need more support to attend well.

Staff speak positively about how the school and federation support them with workload and well-being. Working together across the federation benefits staff and pupils. It improves staff's confidence in their teaching. It also gives them time to plan engaging, effective lessons for pupils. Governors understand their role within the school. As the federation has grown, governors have adapted their approach to ensure that they are able to provide individual schools with effective challenge and support.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In English, the curriculum is not consistently adapted to align with all pupils' starting points. Younger pupils are sometimes asked to undertake writing tasks which are too complex too early. This hampers some pupils' progress through the school's English curriculum. The school should review the planned curriculum in English to ensure enough teaching and practice of foundational knowledge and skills, such as handwriting and composing simple sentences.
- In some foundation subjects, there is variability in how well the planned curriculum is taught and learned. This means pupils in some year groups are not learning as well in some subjects. The school should continue their work to ensure that teaching is consistently strong so that all pupils learn the school's planned curriculum and achieve the best possible outcomes.
- Support for pupils with SEND has been inconsistent over time. This has negatively impacted on the attainment and school experience of some pupils with SEND. The school should continue its work to strengthen SEND provision, ensuring that partnership with parents and provision for pupils is strengthened.

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 the school to be good for overall effectiveness in February 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	114530
Local authority	East Sussex
Inspection number	10341338
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	180
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Peter Clark
Headteacher	Stewart James (executive headteacher) Lindsey Hibbert (head of school)
Website	www.iford-kingston.e-sussex.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	13 and 14 February 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school joined the Skylark Federation in September 2023. Prior to formally joining the federation, the federation had been providing support to the school. The federation is made up of four schools. The executive headteacher oversees all schools within the group. The federation has a single governing body.
- The head of school was appointed to the school in April 2024.
- The school is a Church of England school. The school's last section 48 inspection was carried out in January 2019. This inspection found that the school's distinctive Christian vision and the impact of collective worship required improvement.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- The school provides before- and after-school care for pupils.

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 her evaluation of the school.
- During the inspection, the inspector met with the head of school and the interim executive headteacher. She met with the chair and vice-chair of the governing board, a representative of the local authority and a representative of the Diocese of Chichester.
- The inspector visited a sample of lessons, spoke to some 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' interest first.
- Throughout the inspection, the inspector met with groups of staff. She also considered the opinions expressed through the staff survey.
- The inspector spoke to parents at the start of the school day. She considered responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View, including free-text comments.

Inspection team

Alice Roberts, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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