

Inspection of Five Ashes CofE Primary School

Five Ashes, Mayfield, East Sussex TN20 6HY

Inspection dates:	4 and 5 February 2025
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Requires improvement
Previous inspection grade	Good

What is it like to attend this school?

This school cherishes every child and challenges them to thrive. It is a nurturing place where staff greet pupils daily with a warm welcome. Pupils learn and play joyfully together. They are highly respectful of each other and are welcoming to visitors. It is, therefore, a very welcoming place to be.

The school has high ambitions for all pupils. Recent developments, including a new leadership structure and an overhauled curriculum, have raised standards in key stages 1 and 2. The updated curriculum ensures pupils in mixed-age classes benefit from an aspirational learning experience and achieve well. However, the quality of education is not of the same high standards in the early years, where improvement work is in its infancy.

Pupils behave well and attend school regularly. Learning is rarely interrupted and playtimes are enjoyable. Pupils appreciate the fact that staff understand them and their families very well. This helps pupils feel safe.

Pupils participate in a variety of clubs and trips. In addition to regular woodland days and sports competitions, staff continually seek ways to broaden pupils' horizons. This includes experiences that enable pupils to learn about culture, such as performing opera at Glyndebourne and attending an international tennis event in Eastbourne.

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

Since the previous inspection, the school has strengthened the design of the curriculum to ensure it is ambitious and meets the needs of pupils in mixed-aged group classes. It is organised well so that pupils learn content in a logical order, gradually building their knowledge over time.

Staff have strong subject knowledge. They check pupils' understanding carefully so that they can pick up on and address misconceptions. Most staff model new learning with confidence. Pupils regularly revisit knowledge. This helps them to remember what they have been taught. However, occasionally, tasks set for pupils do not precisely reflect the new curriculum. This can mean that pupils are not always exposed to the new, more ambitious learning, the school intends.

Reading is prioritised. Phonics begins as soon as children join Reception. Well-trained staff deliver the phonics programme effectively. Pupils practise reading with books that are suitably matched to the sounds that they know. Pupils who struggle to keep up with the phonics programme are given the support they need. Older pupils benefit from a thoughtfully designed curriculum of ambitious texts. This exposes pupils to a variety of genres and authors and encourages them to develop a love for reading.

In the early years, children are well cared for. They benefit from warm relationships with staff and a safe, happy environment. However, some aspects of the provision are not as effective as in the rest of the school. Occasionally, staff are not secure in their subject knowledge. Activities do not always engage and enable children to develop and deepen

their understanding of the intended curriculum. The school is alert to these areas and is in the process of implementing improvements.

Pupils attend school regularly and behave highly positively. They exhibit high levels of respect driven by the school's community ethos. However, in the early years, expectations are not as high. Here, frequent interruptions can make learning disjointed and difficult for others to follow.

Personal development is a strength at this school. Pupils benefit from a clearly structured personal, social, health and economic curriculum which has been sequenced with care to ensure pupils get the right information at the right time. This includes essential learning about how to keep themselves safe online. Pupils enjoy representing their school in sporting activities. They are taught about society and develop a good understanding of democracy and equality. Engaging moral education is delivered through assemblies, where pupils reflect on life lessons together. Citizenship is effectively developed through fundraising, community events and engagement with the older generation in the parish.

Governors have articulated a clear vision for the school, encompassing high expectations for pupils and staff. They ensure they receive the necessary information to properly understand the school's strengths and weaknesses, which they use to hold the school accountable. However, since the introduction of the new curriculum, leaders have not routinely evaluated its implementation. They have not identified that some aspects of the curriculum are currently not delivered as intended.

Parents hold a highly positive view of the school. Teachers appreciate recent changes made to roles and responsibilities, which have improved their workload. Staff value the highly inclusive and cohesive team spirit at this school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Since the introduction of a new curriculum, leaders have not routinely monitored and evaluated its implementation. This means they are not always aware of pockets of the curriculum that are not being implemented as they intended. This has, occasionally meant that some pupils have not fully experienced the newly designed, more ambitious curriculum as planned. The school must ensure it systematically reviews the implementation of the curriculum to identify and address any inconsistencies.
- Standards are not as high in the early years. Curriculum implementation does not always engage children or align fully with the intended curriculum. Additionally, some staff do not always have the subject knowledge needed to confidently deliver the intended curriculum and expectations are not as consistently high as they are in other

key stages. This means children are not learning as well as they could. The school has identified early years as a priority. All must ensure that planned curriculum improvements are implemented effectively and staff receive the necessary training to strengthen subject knowledge so that expectations for children's learning are raised to match the ambition of the curriculum.

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	114526
Local authority	East Sussex
Inspection number	10341336
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	58
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Robert French
Headteacher	Darren Gurr (head of school) Jo Warren (executive headteacher)
Website	www.fiveashes.e-sussex.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	10 March 2020, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of The Weald Federation, a hard federation of four small, local-authority-maintained schools in the local area. They share the same governing body and two executive headteachers.
- At the time of inspection, the school was not using any providers of alternative provision.
- The school is a Church of England school in the Diocese of Chichester. The last section 48 inspection took place in February 2018. A date has not yet been set for the next inspection.

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 early years. Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024, will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school's education provision.
- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met and spoke with school leaders, executive leaders, staff, pupils, parents, governors, representatives from the local authority and representatives from the local Diocese.
- The inspection team conducted deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, inspectors 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. Inspectors also discussed geography, art and writing.
- Inspectors considered the responses to the Ofsted Parent View questionnaire. They also considered the responses to the confidential Ofsted staff survey and the views of pupils gathered throughout the inspection.
- 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.
- Inspectors considered information about pupils' attendance, behaviour and wider learning. They also met with the school's special educational needs and disabilities coordinator.

Inspection team

James Stuart, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Caroline Clarke

Ofsted Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2025