

Inspection of a good school: Nutley Church of England Primary School

High Street, Nutley, Uckfield, East Sussex TN22 3NW

Inspection date: 22 June 2021

Outcome

Nutley Church of England Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Leaders want the very best for pupils at this small village school. They aspire for pupils to leave with the knowledge, skills and values that they need for the future. Pupils are eager to meet adults' high expectations of them. There is a strong sense of community spirit, which is underpinned by the school's Christian ethos. Everyone is proud to be part of 'Team Nutley'.

Pupils enjoy their time at school. They feel safe and well cared for. Bullying is rare. If there are any issues, pupils use the 'worry box' or talk to staff. They trust adults to help them sort things out quickly.

Pupils behave impeccably at all times. They are polite and respectful to each other as well as to adults. Everyone understands and follows the 'golden rules'. Pupils are encouraged to be 'gentle, kind, helpful, listen, honest, work hard, and look after property'.

Parents speak highly of the school. They value the support their children receive. One parent summed up how many feel, and told inspectors that, 'Staff treat my children as individuals and we absolutely love Nutley.'

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

All pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) study a broad range of subjects. Leaders have identified the important knowledge they want pupils to know from Reception to Year 6 in subjects such as mathematics, religious education (RE) and physical education (PE). In science, although the curriculum is firmly in place, it is not followed consistently. In some other subjects, such as history and geography, the curriculum is not as well developed. Leaders are currently in the process of identifying the essential knowledge and skills that should be taught in these subjects.

Teachers understand the needs of the pupils with SEND. They put in place appropriate resources to support these pupils' pastoral and physical needs. Training is underway for all staff so they can better help this group of pupils with their learning.

Leaders are passionate about pupils developing a love of reading. In all classes, starting in Reception, teachers read to pupils every day. They introduce interesting texts, which capture pupils' imaginations and help develop their writing. The school's attractive and well-stocked library is very popular with older pupils, who told inspectors that they would like to spend more time in it.

Although most pupils can read fluently and confidently, the school's approach to teaching phonics is not working well enough for a few. Leaders are planning more staff training to help the few pupils who need to catch up.

Classrooms are calm and purposeful. Pupils listen attentively to their teachers and lessons are rarely disrupted. Pupils are proud of what they achieve. They enthusiastically discussed their work with inspectors. For instance, they were able to explain the life cycle of a tree and explain how reading poetry has inspired them to write poems of their own.

The headteacher is determined that pupils' wider opportunities should not be limited because they attend a small school. Teachers ensure that pupils have a variety of memorable experiences, such as visiting the nearby Ashdown Forest or places of historical interest. Older pupils are encouraged to take on leadership roles, such as joining the faith council. Pupils take part in different sporting events, learn to play musical instruments and attend craft clubs, where they learn to use a sewing machine. Pupils enjoy 'futures day', where they find out about possible careers in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. During the inspection, Year 6 talked happily about their recent camping trip and their newly learned 'survival' skills.

There have been a few temporary arrangements made to the way the school has been run over the last year. These are linked to the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic. Throughout this period, the headteacher and governors have continued to show an unfaltering commitment to pupils and staff. Teachers have great confidence in the leadership of the headteacher. They say that she is mindful of their workload. Staff appreciate the benefits of working closely with a number of local schools. Governors know the school well and assure themselves that leaders' actions are bringing about improvement. They are reflective and measured in their work. Leaders make good use of the support provided by the local authority.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is a culture of vigilance and care at the school. Staff are alert to any risks to their pupils. They understand how to report and escalate their concerns. Leaders ensure that staff are well trained in safeguarding matters and carry out the appropriate recruitment checks. Leaders have acted swiftly to address minor actions identified in a recent local authority safeguarding review.

Leaders work closely with families who have needed extra support over the last year. Strong relationships and effective communication between everyone ensure that pupils are kept safe.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The curriculum is not yet coherently planned and sequenced in some subjects, such as history, geography and art. However, it is clear from leaders' actions that they are in the process of bringing this about. Leaders need to ensure that each subject is carefully planned and sequenced from Reception to Year 6. These plans should identify the important knowledge that leaders want pupils to learn. This will help all pupils to do well, including those with SEND. For this reason, the transition arrangements have been applied in this case.
- Although most pupils can read fluently, there are some inconsistencies in how phonics is taught. The very small number of pupils who need support to read do not always have strategies to help them decode words successfully. Leaders need to put in place their plans to make sure that staff are well trained.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good or outstanding school. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that a good school could now be better than good, or that standards may be declining, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will convert the section 8 inspection to a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the second section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in May 2012.

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 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.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for published performance information about the school [here](#).

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	114517
Local authority	East Sussex
Inspection number	10192851
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	5 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	96
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Hilary Randall
Headteacher	Elizabeth Peasgood
Website	www.nutleyprimaryschool.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	8 June 2016, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The school is a voluntary-controlled Church of England school in the Diocese of Chichester.

Information about this inspection

- 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 senior leaders, staff and pupils. They also met with five governors, including the chair of governors.
- Inspectors had two telephone conversations with representatives from the local authority.
- Inspectors reviewed the school's safeguarding arrangements. They looked at relevant documentation and staff recruitment checks as well as the local authority's recent safeguarding review of the school.

- Inspectors took account of the 29 responses to the Ofsted Parent View survey, and 29 free-text comments. Inspectors also considered 14 replies to the confidential staff survey.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics and science. They also looked at curriculum planning for RE, PE, history and geography. Inspectors spoke to senior leaders, subject leaders and class teachers about how these subjects are planned and delivered. Inspectors visited lessons, talked to pupils about what they had learned and looked at their work. Inspectors also listened to pupils read.

Inspection team

Frances Nation, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Chris Ellison

Her Majesty's Inspector

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