

Inspection of a good school: Sir Henry Fermor Church of England Primary School

Crowborough Hill, Crowborough, East Sussex TN6 2SD

Inspection dates: 16 and 17 April 2024

Outcome

Sir Henry Fermor Church of England Primary School continues to be a good school.

The headteacher of this school is Vicki Edwards. This school is part of the Tenax Schools Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the interim chief executive officer, Richard Tyson, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Simon Curtis.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are thoughtful and considerate at this welcoming school. They behave well in lessons and at breaktimes. Pupils are caring and friendly and make sure they include any pupils sat on the 'buddy bench' in their games. They feel happy, safe and confident in raising concerns with staff in the knowledge that teachers will deal with them quickly and fairly.

Teachers have high expectations of pupils' conduct and achievement. They use reminders consistently to help pupils remain calm and focused. Pupils have positive attitudes to learning and listen attentively to teachers, concentrating well. For example, children in Reception showed high levels of perseverance in following instructions to create houses outside, despite the rain.

Pupils are proud to attend the school and take on a range of responsibilities. All pupils have opportunities to take up a number of roles that promote leadership skills. They can act as classroom monitors and organise resources or check on energy use and recycling in the school as part of the 'Eco-Group'. Pupils also elect their classmates to the school council. The Year 6 head boy and girl act as ambassadors for the school. Pupils take their responsibilities in these roles seriously.

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

The school has designed an ambitious and well-sequenced curriculum. It has considered

the important information that pupils need to learn thoughtfully. The school ensures that pupils have opportunities to revisit and build on their prior learning effectively. However, in some subjects, such as mathematics, the curriculum is not fully embedded. As a result, some pupils do not learn as well as they could.

Teachers identify pupils' needs accurately. They plan a variety of support and adaptations to enable pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities to learn the full curriculum and achieve well. For example, in history, teachers use well-thought-through activities to enable all pupils to write detailed comparisons of Viking and Anglo-Saxon invasions.

Staff have sound subject knowledge and use it to design exciting and engaging activities. They explain learning clearly and demonstrate activities accurately. Teachers challenge pupils and encourage them to develop their problem-solving and reasoning skills. Pupils share their learning confidently with their classmates.

Teachers check pupils' understanding rigorously. They use a variety of tests and quizzes to build an understanding of what pupils remember from previous lessons. Teachers use what they know about pupils' learning to identify those who are not keeping up with learning and to plan a range of support to help them fill gaps in their knowledge. Pupils write at age-appropriate levels and use vocabulary accurately in their extended writing.

Pupils are enthusiastic readers. They discuss the wide assortment of stories and non-fiction texts that they read excitedly. Teachers ensure that phonics is delivered effectively. They explain learning clearly and model the important sounds and letters that pupils need to know. As a result, pupils learn to read fluently and confidently. Teachers identify those pupils who require additional support quickly and give them appropriate high-quality support to catch up.

Staff build warm and caring relationships with pupils. Teachers are clear about expected behaviours and pupils set a good example for each other. For example, pupils hold open doors for each other and ensure that classrooms are tidy at the end of lessons. Classrooms are calm and purposeful, and pupils volunteer to share their ideas if they feel that they have something to offer. Pupils attend frequently and the school tracks pupils' absence carefully. The school works well with external agencies to support pupils' attendance.

The school ensures that pupils build a clear understanding of important concepts such as consent and healthy relationships through a range of well-designed activities. Teachers enhance these activities through assemblies and rich discussions. The school enriches the curriculum through engaging trips and visits. For instance, they visit a local beach as part of their learning on coasts or Battle Abbey as part of learning about the Reformation. Pupils learn about a range of artists and significant figures from a variety of cultures and historical periods. They develop mature attitudes to diversity and difference.

The school manages staff workload and welfare carefully. Staff feel well supported and have access to a variety of training including input from subject leaders to improve their subject knowledge and confidence in delivering the curriculum.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a small number of subjects, including mathematics, leaders have recently introduced an ambitious new curriculum. However, this is not yet fully embedded, and as a result, pupils do not learn as well as they could. Leaders must ensure the curriculum is fully embedded and that pupils achieve well in all subjects.

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 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 would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which 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 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	142611
Local authority	East Sussex
Inspection number	10322012
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	372
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Simon Curtis
CEO of the trust	Richard Tyson (Interim)
Headteacher	Vicki Edwards
Website	www.fermorschool.org.uk
Dates of previous inspection	27 and 28 February 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- Sir Henry Fermor Church of England Primary is a Church of England voluntary-aided school. The school's most recent section 48 Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools took place in June 2019.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of the school's education provision.
- This is 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 their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, as well as with other leaders and staff. The inspector also met with leaders from the Tenax Schools Trust. He also met with school governors and held a telephone conversation with a representative of the diocese.

- The inspector carried out deep dives in the following subjects: reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, the inspector 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.
- 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.

Inspection team

Gavin Thomas, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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