

Inspection of Hever Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Hever Road, Hever, Edenbridge, Kent TN8 7NH

Inspection dates:	22 and 23 October 2024
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are proud to be part of this welcoming and vibrant school. They live out the school values through their roles as school councillors, reading buddies and by helping younger children on school trips. Pupils learn to be courageous and compassionate citizens in the wider community by collecting for the food bank and helping at local community events.

The school is highly ambitious for pupils' academic achievement and their character development. Pupils learn how to be emotionally resilient, so they can challenge themselves to learn more deeply and confidently. For example, when learning about relief sculptures, they work like artists, persevering with different methods and materials until they are satisfied with their designs.

Right from entering Reception, pupils learn the school's clear behaviour expectations. These are consistently reinforced through well understood routines. Relationships between adults and pupils are full of warmth and mutual respect. Adults are consistent role models in kindness and working together as a team. As a result, pupils concentrate well in lessons and behave respectfully around the school. Pupils learn how to recognise their emotions and how to help themselves if they are feeling angry or anxious. They know they can always talk to any adult when they need to.

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

Adults and pupils alike are inspired by the school's ambitious vision. Staff are proud to be part of this team. The school has made many improvements in recent times. The impact of these changes is now clear to see. Pupils learn a broad and ambitious curriculum. They thrive personally and achieve well.

The school is committed to making reading a high priority constantly. In Reception, children are surrounded by stories, poetry, and songs. They start learning to read straight away, becoming familiar with letter sounds. They practise writing letters regularly. Teachers systematically check that pupils understand the sounds they are learning. Any pupils who struggle are supported through individualised teaching, specifically tailored to meet their needs. Consequently, pupils rapidly become fluent readers and achieve well.

Teachers know pupils well. They watch attentively how pupils learn and identify any who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The school is determined that pupils with SEND will achieve highly. Adults carefully design bespoke support for pupils with SEND when necessary. Staff encourage pupils with SEND to learn independently, so they are ready for the next stage in their education.

The curriculum is broad and ambitious. It sets out coherently the most important areas that pupils must understand and remember. The school has identified the key technical vocabulary that pupils need to understand. This is explicitly taught, and pupils practise applying it in discussions about their learning.

Teachers have secure subject knowledge. They explain the curriculum in ways that pupils can understand. In mathematics, teachers adapt activities and use resources to help pupils learn the value of decimal numbers. In Reception, they design activities according to children's interests, so the curriculum is learned through purposeful play. For example, children learn the concept of 'full' and 'empty' through high quality discussions with adults as they play with different sized containers in the water tray. Typically, teachers check for understanding effectively. They notice pupils' misconceptions and address them straight away. However, in some subjects, teachers do not routinely revisit previous learning to help pupils commit it to their long-term memory. This means pupils do not learn as well as they should in these subjects.

The school prepares pupils well for life in modern Britain. Pupils develop an understanding of others' opinions through learning about different faiths and cultures. They learn to appreciate living in a democratic country, knowing that in some parts of the world, children must work and cannot have an education. Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe, including on the internet. They know the difference between healthy and unhealthy relationships, eating a balanced diet, getting enough sleep, and exercising regularly.

The school prioritises pupils' attendance. High expectations and supportive strategies are consistently maintained so that attendance overall is in line with national levels. Persistent absence of disadvantaged pupils is reducing. Pupils show highly positive attitudes to their learning. They behave respectfully and are motivated and resilient. Low level disruption is extremely rare and does not interrupt pupils' learning.

The governing body understands the challenges pupils and their families face. They are knowledgeable about their statutory duties and support the school's work effectively. Governors keep a watchful eye on safeguarding and attendance trends. Leaders have positive relationships with parents who are highly supportive of the school's work.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some foundation subjects, the school does not routinely revisit previous learning. As a result, pupils' knowledge is not as secure as it could be in these subjects. Pupils sometimes struggle to recall what they have learned and connect it to new learning. The school should continue to strengthen teaching approaches across the curriculum, so that pupils learn consistently well in all subjects.

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	118718
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10321856
Type of school	Primary
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	159
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Bridget Harris
Headteacher	Helene Bligh
Website	www.hever.kent.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	1 February 2024, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.
- The school has a religious character. The last section 48 was carried out in June 2017.
- The school runs an after-school provision.

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 any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth form provision). 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.
- During the inspection, the inspectors met with the headteacher and the senior leadership team. The lead inspector met with a representative from the local authority and a diocesan representative. She also met with members of the school's governing body.
- Inspectors met with several groups of pupils about their learning.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics, history and art. For each deep dive, inspectors visited a sample of lessons, spoke with pupils about their learning, spoke with leaders and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, 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' interest first.
- Throughout the inspection, the inspectors met with groups of staff. They also considered the opinions expressed through Ofsted's online staff survey.
- Inspectors considered the views expressed through Ofsted Parent View.

Inspection team

Jo Brinkley, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Tash Hurtado

Ofsted Inspector

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