

Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: Ash Cartwright and Kelsey Church of England Primary School

School Road, Ash, Canterbury, Kent CT3 2JD

Inspection dates:

25 and 26 March 2025

Outcome

Evidence gathered during this ungraded (section 8) inspection suggests that the school's work may have improved significantly across all areas since the previous inspection. The school's next inspection will be a graded inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Everyone is welcomed and valued in this highly inclusive and nurturing small village school. Pupils thrive and are very happy in the calm, friendly and caring atmosphere. Pupils' well-being is given the highest priority. The school's values of friendship, community, forgiveness, perseverance, joy and creation underpin everything that the school does. These values are upheld and demonstrated very well by pupils and ensure they grow into well-rounded, confident young people.

The school has high expectations of all pupils for their personal as well as academic achievements. Pupils live up to these expectations. Pupils behave extremely well. They appreciate the outdoor facilities they have. The school sets great store in using the outdoor space for learning.

Pupils enjoy lessons and are enthusiastic to learn new things. There are very positive and trusting relationships between staff and children. This helps pupils to feel safe, nurtured and secure. A group of pupils agreed that this school is amazing, fair and safe and you will always feel safe no matter what happens. Pupils are very appreciative and enthusiastic about the many trips they make, which, as they say, 'bring learning to life.'

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

There is absolutely no complacency in this school. Highly effective leadership ensures that the school goes from strength to strength. Leaders know precisely where work needs to be done to improve this excellent school even further. Leaders at all levels, including

governors, ensure that all actions they take are in the very best interest of the pupils. Staff are overwhelmingly positive and proud to be working at the school. They feel greatly valued and appreciate the consideration given to their workload and well-being. Parents are extremely supportive of the school.

The school has an ambitious curriculum. It is well designed and takes into account pupils' interests exceptionally well. The important knowledge and skills pupils need to learn are set out from the early years to Year 6. The curriculum is equally ambitious for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) as it is for all others. Staff are very skilled at identifying and supporting pupils with SEND. Most pupils with SEND learn successfully alongside their peers in the classroom. An appropriately tailored approach is in place for some pupils with more highly complex needs.

Children get off to an exceptional start in the Nursery and Reception. They develop strong foundations on which to build future learning. They benefit from excellent opportunities to develop their independence and resilience. This continues throughout the school. Teachers have strong subject knowledge and deliver lessons confidently and clearly. They check on pupils' understanding throughout the lessons and are quick to pick up and address any misconceptions.

Pupils' books show that learning is remembered and used extremely well. Pupils are secure in their subject-specific knowledge and skills. They access more complex concepts and make connections across their learning with great confidence. All pupils, whatever their needs, achieve well from their different starting points. This is helped by the school's strong work to support pupils with SEND. Their precise needs are identified, and appropriate adaptations are made to help them succeed.

Reading is a priority. Phonics skills are taught very effectively, and, as a result, most pupils learn letters and the sounds they make. They use their skills well in their early reading and writing. Leaders ensure that pupils who need to continue learning phonics skills into key stage 2 are given very effective support. A love of reading is promoted all around the school, and pupils are encouraged to read widely and often. Pupils develop as confident, fluent readers, which supports their learning across the curriculum.

The school excels in fostering a real sense of belonging for all pupils. Pupils accept and respect differences in others' faiths and backgrounds. They understand that some pupils learn in different ways. Pupils are friendly, polite and interesting to talk to. Leaders work diligently to improve pupils' attendance. They support pupils and their families but, most importantly, make sure that the school is a place where children want to be.

The school provides pupils with a rich range of activities beyond the academic, including after-school clubs, visits, visitors to school and special events. Pupils have a depth of understanding about looking after their physical and mental health. For example, pupils spoke about how the daily mile at the start of the day 'helps get your brain ready for learning and keeps you fit'. Pupils are taught how to stay safe online and in the community. These experiences further enrich pupils' cultural, social and spiritual

development. Pupils are very well prepared for the future as caring and thoughtful citizens.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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 September 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	118745
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10341520
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	174
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Charlie Dunn
Headteacher	Fiona Crascall
Website	www.ackschool.org.uk
Dates of previous inspection	24 and 25 September 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- As a Church of England school, it is part of the Diocese of Canterbury. Its most recent section 48 inspection was in October 2019.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of the 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 their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector held meetings with the headteacher and the assistant headteacher, curriculum leaders and other staff.
- The inspector met with members of the governing body, including the chair of the governing body.
- The inspector met with the local authority school improvement adviser and held a

telephone conversation with a representative from the diocese.

- 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.
- The inspector visited a sample of lessons, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspector examined a range of documentation provided by the school, including its evaluation of its performance and its development plan.
- The inspector considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including free-text comments, and met with some parents on the gate at the beginning of the day. She also took into consideration the responses to the staff survey, as well as speaking to staff and pupils throughout the inspection.

Inspection team

Margaret Coussins, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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