

Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: Hurst Green Church of England Primary School and Nursery

London Road, Hurst Green, Etchingam, East Sussex TN19 7PN

Inspection date:

18 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.

The headteacher of this school is Allison Flack. This school is part of the Diocese of Chichester Academy Trust which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Mark Talbot, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Nick Taunt.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are fiercely proud of their small village school. They are excited to arrive to school every morning. Pupils embody the school's 'Core Christian' values. A climate of trust, friendship and compassion permeates all aspects of school life. Older pupils ensure that children in early years are welcomed into the school community and supported to join in with all aspects of school life. Children as young as two play happily on the school playground with other pupils.

The school is ambitious for every pupil to reach their full potential, academically and personally. Pupils get the support they need to achieve highly. Individual talents and interests are identified, nurtured and celebrated. Pupils behave exceptionally well. They are attentive in lessons, and highly motivated to learn.

Pupils benefit from the extensive range of enrichment opportunities provided by the school. The school has a carefully planned programme of trips and visits to build pupils' cultural capital and to support pupils to deepen their understanding of key areas of the school's curriculum. Pupils take on additional roles and responsibilities, such as pupil council and worship warriors with relish. Ongoing opportunities are provided so pupils engage with and contribute to their local community.

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

The school has developed their curriculum offer since the last inspection. It continues to be ambitious and well-sequenced. The school has taken careful account of the needs of all pupils in designing their curriculum. Teachers are confident with their adaptations of the curriculum to enable pupils to achieve ambitious learning outcomes. Pupils who need more practice to secure key curriculum content benefit from ongoing opportunities to revisit and revise key learning.

Across the curriculum, the checks teachers made on pupils' learning are purposeful. Teachers identify pupils with misconceptions or gaps in their knowledge and understanding. They address these gaps quickly and effectively. Teachers provide pupils with helpful feedback about how to improve in each subject. Consequently, across the curriculum, pupils develop detailed knowledge and skills and achieve highly.

The school's approach to teaching early reading has been further strengthened to ensure that reading fluency is prioritised from the start. Children in Nursery are carefully supported to develop their listening and attention skills, so that in Reception they are ready to begin the school's phonics programme. Staff ensure that all pupils at an early stage of learning to read have ongoing opportunities to read and re-read books that are matched to the sounds they know. Any pupil at risk of falling behind is identified quickly and effectively supported to catch up. Children's love of books and stories is carefully nurtured. Throughout the school, pupils have opportunities to hear and talk about high-quality stories. Older pupils have positive attitudes to reading. They read widely with confidence.

The school is highly inclusive. From the start of Nursery, the school effectively identifies any pupils needing more support, particularly children whose speech and language is behind age-related expectations. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are quickly identified. They have the right support from the start. Staff are persistent in ensuring that these children develop the foundational skills and knowledge necessary for key stage 1. This continues in later years where pupils with SEND develop as confident learners and achieve highly.

Pupils have a strong understanding of the importance of the school's expectations for their behaviour and conduct. These expectations are established in early years and are consistent across classes. Staff are rightly proud of the positive climate for learning established across the school.

The school places a strong emphasis on pupils' personal development. It has developed a highly effective 'Life Skills' curriculum. This encompasses personal, social and health education as well as sex and relationships education. Pupils develop a secure understanding of fundamental British values and of the protected characteristics. The school's personal development programme helps to nurture pupils' self-confidence and self-belief. They learn about how they can contribute within the school and beyond in meaningful ways.

Leaders at all levels are highly effective in their roles. Support from the trust has enabled the school to bring about increasingly rapid improvement. The school benefits from wider networking in the trust to develop its strong practice further. Those responsible for governance have a clear vision for the school, and work effectively both to support leaders and to hold them to account on behalf of pupils.

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 predecessor school to be good for overall effectiveness in May 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	148741
Local authority	East Sussex
Inspection number	10341899
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	136
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Interim chair of trustees	Nick Taunt
CEO of the trust	Mark Talbot
Headteacher	Allison Flack
Website	www.hurstgreen.e-sussex.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Hurst Green Church of England Primary School and Nursery converted to become an academy school in January 2022. When its predecessor school, Hurst Green Church of England Primary School and Nursery, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good for overall effectiveness.
- The school is part of the Diocese of Chichester Academy Trust.
- The school operates a Nursery with provision for two-year-olds.
- The school provides before- and after-school care for pupils.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- The school is a Church of England school, within the Diocese of Chichester. The school's most recent section 48 inspection was carried out in March 2019.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- 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 has taken that into account in her evaluation of the school.
- During the inspection, inspectors met with the headteacher and other senior leaders. Inspectors met with the trust's director of education, the deputy CEO and CEO. The lead inspector met with the interim chair of trustees, representatives of the local governing board and a representative of the Diocese of Chichester.
- Inspectors visited a sample of lessons, spoke to some pupils about their learning 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, inspectors met with groups of staff. Inspectors also considered the opinions expressed through the staff survey.
- Inspectors spoke to parents at the end of the school day. Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View, including free-text comments.

Inspection team

Alice Roberts, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Adnan Ahmet

Ofsted Inspector

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