

Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: King Offa Primary Academy

Down Road, Bexhill-on-Sea, East Sussex TN39 4HS

Inspection dates:

23 and 24 April 2025

Outcome

King Offa Primary Academy has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

The headteacher of this school is James Towner. This school is part of Aurora Academies 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), James Freeston, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Martha Burnige. There is also a director of school improvement, Laylee Pocock, who has provided interim leadership for this school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy to be part of this inclusive school community. They work hard in lessons, rising to meet the high expectations of staff. As a result, they achieve well. They understand how the school's values of Knowledge, Opportunity, Pride and Achievement support them in working together and developing as people. For example, one child explained that opportunities must be taken 'so that we learn to get out of our comfort zone and become confident to try new things'.

Behaviour around the school is calm, and pupils play well together. As they move around the school, they are proud to be recognised for being 'calm and quiet' as they do so. In the rare instances where bullying happens, pupils trust staff to deal with it well.

The school has recently enhanced the range of opportunities for pupils to take on leadership roles. For example, being part of the newly formed school council or acting as ambassadors for well-being, sports, 'front of house' or librarians are relished by pupils. They take these seriously and look forward to the opportunities they will have to serve their community as these develop.

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

The school, along with the trust, has developed a well-considered curriculum across subjects. The knowledge and skills that pupils need to know have been carefully sequenced from the early years to help pupils develop an increasingly secure body of knowledge and skills.

Reading is a high priority in the school. 'Reading rivers' that are visible across the school share the texts that engage and excite pupils. Phonics is taught especially well by staff with expertise. If pupils need more support, the school provides well-placed interventions to develop pupils' confidence and fluency.

Teachers have assured subject knowledge. They make checks on what pupils have understood. In mathematics and in reading, these checks are precise, so misconceptions are picked up and corrected quickly. In some areas of the wider curriculum, however, these checks are not as consistently sharp. This means that staff do not routinely have the same understanding about what pupils know or where they need more help.

In some areas, pupils are supported to remember their learning well over time. Regular reminders of previous learning help pupils to see how this connects and builds into what they are learning now. This is not the case across some areas of the wider curriculum. In these, while pupils can talk with confidence about their current work, they are less able to recall what they have learned before.

In the past, there has not been consistently effective support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Staff have benefited from adept training to support their understanding of pupils' needs, which are identified and well understood. In lessons, effective adaptations to learning now ensure that pupils can access their learning effectively and achieve well.

The early years and nursery in the school are especially strong elements of its provision. Children play happily together and learn rapidly from well-considered activities. High-quality talk is modelled by adults throughout this space, so children can respond in kind.

Significant changes to the leadership of the school since the last inspection have led to some parents feeling unsettled. However, the trust has ensured consistent expertise so that pupils remain at the heart of decisions made. Interim leadership in the school ensured that the momentum for continued improvement was unfaltering. Governors and trustees share an effective understanding of the school's strengths. They take appropriate steps to assure themselves that their actions have the impact they need to. Staff share a positive sense about where the school is going, and leaders at all levels share high ambitions for where the school can continue to develop further.

Substantive improvements to behaviour and attendance of pupils have been evident over the last year. The school has high expectations of how pupils conduct themselves, supporting them to reflect on how their conduct affects others. This is both in school, through the increasing range of opportunities to develop pupils' leadership skills and

responsibilities, as well as in the wider community, such as the recent 'random acts of kindness' project. For the small number of pupils who struggle to meet these high expectations, appropriate support is in place.

Pupils are supported to attend school well, and levels of absence have now decreased sharply. However, some of the most vulnerable pupils in the school still do not attend well enough. Leaders recognise this as an ongoing area of focus.

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, pupils are not consistently supported to retain their knowledge over time. The school needs to ensure that pupils are given opportunities to recap, revisit and recall their learning to support them in being able to connect their learning and retain this in the longer term.

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 January 2020.

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	138400
Local authority	East Sussex
Inspection number	10379863
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	430
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Martha Burnige
CEO of the trust	James Freeston
Headteacher	James Towner
Website	www.kingoffaprimaryacademy.org
Dates of previous inspection	15 and 16 January 2020, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school has been part of Aurora Academies Trust since September 2012.
- There have been a number of changes to the leadership of the school since the last inspection, including the headteacher, who took up his post in April 2025 at the beginning of this inspection.
- The school currently uses no alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a 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 executive headteacher, headteacher, senior leaders, staff and pupils. The inspector met with the members of the trust board, including the chair of trustees. She also met with members of the local academy board, including the chair.
- 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 took account of a range of other information, including the school's development plans, school policies, and trust and local academy board minutes.
- The inspector spoke with pupils about their experience of the school. They took account of parent and carer and staff views through conversations and responses to Ofsted's surveys.

Inspection team

Marian Feeley

His Majesty's Inspector

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