

Inspection of Wickhambreaux Church of England Primary School

The Street, Wickhambreaux, Canterbury, Kent CT3 1RN

Inspection dates:	1 and 2 April 2025
The quality of education	Outstanding
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Outstanding
Early years provision	Outstanding
Previous inspection grade	Outstanding

Until November 2020, the school was exempt from routine inspection because it was judged as outstanding for overall effectiveness at its previous inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. The school has not been inspected under section 5 of the Act since February 2015. Since September 2024, schools have not been awarded an overall effectiveness grade.

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a happy, nurturing school where pupils smile a lot. Staff are an equally happy team of dedicated professionals. Teachers' aspirations for what all pupils can achieve, in and out of the classroom, are admirably high. Expectations of pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds are uncompromising. Pupils meet and exceed these expectations because they are motivated and love school. They feel safe here. This includes feeling safe to make mistakes along the way. Pupils' work across the curriculum is consistently of a high quality.

The school's excellent Reception Year offers strong provision. Children understand and use complex mathematical vocabulary. They enjoy learning to speak and sing in French. They understand musical terms such as 'tempo' and 'pitch' as they sing like pirates or negotiate the complexities of performing a round.

Pupils' behaviour in classrooms and around the school is impressive. They are respectful and kind to each other, staff and visitors. They are welcoming to new pupils who join the Wickhambreaux family, sometimes from distant parts of the world. Older pupils are particularly positive about their friendships. They understand the benefits of teamwork. Unkindness to any degree is frowned upon.

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

This is a small school that truly sits at the heart of the community it serves. The school's values of love, respect and community overtly underpin day-to-day life here. Leaders at all levels, including those in positions of governance, know the school well. They provide strong direction. Staff are proud to work here. Their well-being and workload are taken seriously. They feel valued, and this shows in their work.

Classrooms are positive places. Talented staff teach using expert subject knowledge. Teachers design tasks that promote pupils' learning. Staff check pupils' understanding accurately and revisit learning when needed. The school ensures that strong traditions mix comfortably with the latest educational research and best practice available. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities succeed because their needs are identified swiftly, constantly reviewed and catered for diligently.

The school's curriculum is well planned but ever evolving. It is firmly grounded in early years before flowing freely from its source through to Year 6. Pupils did not achieve as highly as usual in the 2024 key stage 2 mathematics tests. Leaders have responded swiftly to this, and current pupils' achievement is excellent. Pupils are ready for their move to secondary school when it comes. Their depth of knowledge and understanding in subjects beyond mathematics and English is impressive. They can think as biologists, as physicists and as chemists. They love composing, happy to work in groups to perform their own work on a range of instruments. Older pupils are able to read, write and speak in French, confident to share their skills with visitors. Their work as historians leaves them with a growing understanding of the local area and the rich past it has witnessed.

Reading, the love of books and the written and spoken word are the bedrock of learning here. Children in Reception are taught the importance of listening as part of the art of good conversation. Pupils in key stage 2 share opinions enthusiastically about their likes and dislikes about books. They know their opinions are valid and valued. Those who struggle to read fluently are supported well by expert staff on their journey to become confident readers.

Pupils have highly positive attitudes and are highly engaged. They see learning as fun at this school. Their talents and interests are prioritised to make learning relevant. Trips outside of the school are the norm. Staff fully exploit the history from the Roman era through to the Victorians and World War 2 that sits a stone's throw from the school gate.

The school's extra-curricular offer is excellent. Pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds are equally well served by the wide range of opportunities available. These opportunities include individual instrumental tuition, residential trips and visits to museums and theatres. Clubs are popular, including painting in watercolour and a range of opportunities to enjoy sport. The school's band of brass players is an accomplished group. Its performance at the upcoming Easter celebration is eagerly anticipated, not least by the players themselves.

Pupils' emotional development has a high priority. They have an age-appropriate understanding of equality and diversity. They enjoy learning about different faiths and cultures. Their spiritual development goes beyond the school's Christian ethos. Older pupils were recently challenged to think 'big questions' about life. This has resulted in a striking display of written notes that equally challenge adults to stop and reflect a little.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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	118660
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10341506
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	106
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Helen Abbott
Headteacher	Lisa Crosbie
Website	www.wickhambreaux-school.ik.org
Dates of previous inspection	25 and 26 February 2015

Information about this school

- This is a voluntary controlled Church of England primary school in the Diocese of Canterbury.
- As a school with a religious ethos, the school's denominational education and collective worship was last inspected under Section 48 in October 2017.
- The school does not use alternative 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.
- 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 have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors held a wide range of meetings with leaders at all levels, as well as teaching and support staff. The lead inspector met with the chair of the governing body and three other governors. He met with a representative of the local authority. He also held a telephone conversation with an officer from the Diocese of Canterbury.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, music and science. For each deep dive, inspectors 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. Inspectors also discussed the curriculum in some other subjects with leaders.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of parents, 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.
- Pupils were talked to throughout the inspection to gain their views about the school. The lead inspector also talked formally to a representative group of pupils.
- Inspectors considered the views of parents submitted through Ofsted Parent View. The views of staff and pupils were also considered through Ofsted's staff and pupil surveys.

Inspection team

Clive Close, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Liz McIntosh

Ofsted Inspector

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