

Inspection of Castle Hill Community Primary School

Sidney Street, Folkestone, Kent CT19 6HG

Inspection dates: 6 and 7 March 2024

Overall effectiveness

Good

The quality of education

Good

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Good

Early years provision

Good

Previous inspection grade

Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

This school is at the heart of its community. Strong relationships based on mutual respect are evident between staff and pupils. These relationships help pupils to feel safe and secure. Adults focus on understanding each pupil's individual needs and adapting provision to meet these. The vision for every pupil to be fully included in school life is realised and is recognised by stakeholders. Parents comment positively on the caring and nurturing environment where pupils can flourish.

Leaders have a genuine desire to show pupils that they can aim high and be aspirational for the future. Pupils' horizons are broadened through the wealth of trips, visits and visitors that the school provides. Pupils are eager to talk about these experiences, such as the trips to the areas that their class names represent. They fondly recall the Dymchurch railway ride and their trips to the local beach.

The curriculum is designed to prepare pupils for future learning. The school is determined to give every pupil the best chance of future success. Pupils genuinely believe that staff want the best for them and will help them to achieve their goals. A passion for improving pupils' life chances is ingrained in the school's ethos.

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

Since the last inspection, the school has worked hard to develop the curriculum. Using external support, leaders have successfully ensured a clearly sequenced curriculum which shows what pupils will learn from the early years to Year 6. In addition, the school has carefully considered the professional development opportunities for staff so they have the skills needed to deliver the ambitious curriculum. Outcomes in mathematics last year were below the national average. Consequently, mathematics provision has been reviewed and developed and is now designed to prepare all pupils for future learning. Currently, there is variation in how well staff implement this new curriculum.

Across the curriculum, staff have a firm understanding of any gaps pupils have in their knowledge. In lessons, adults show pupils what they need to do to complete activities and they check that pupils have grasped the key content. There are robust systems for the early identification of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). This helps staff to offer precise support for pupils with SEND in a swift manner. Where possible, pupils from the school's specially resourced provision for pupils with SEND work alongside their peers in mainstream classes. This helps to promote the school's inclusive culture. The help that pupils get is tailored to their specific needs. In the early years staff understand children's needs well but do not always use every opportunity to deepen children's knowledge.

Reading is given the highest priority in school. The school supports all pupils to learn to read as quickly as possible, so they can access the curriculum. Staff have strong subject knowledge, which helps them to support pupils who are learning to read. The school promotes a love of reading. Adults motivate pupils to read by sharing

books and celebrating those who read frequently. Pupils love choosing new books to take home and are excited to have their reading efforts noticed.

The school has ensured that the behaviour policy is understood by everyone. All staff apply this with consistency. As a result, pupils understand and rise to the high expectations for how they will conduct themselves in school. From the nursery onwards, children are supported to know the routines. Consequently, children are well prepared for the move into reception and beyond. Staff are excellent role models. They teach pupils how to persevere when they find things difficult and the importance of being honest. These core values help pupils to develop exceptionally positive attitudes towards learning. Pupils' enthusiasm for their learning is apparent throughout the school. In Reception, for example, children talked eagerly about the dinosaur eggs which hatched and happily wrote letters to the dinosaur's family.

Pupils' character is developed deliberately through the curriculum and wider opportunities the school has designed. There is an emphasis on tolerance and inclusion. Pupils are certain that everyone is treated fairly. They are proud to celebrate what makes them special. The school places great importance on building pupils' understanding of the world beyond Folkestone. The annual careers day helps older pupils to recognise future roles that are available to them. The school further supports this raising of aspirations by providing opportunities for pupils to be leaders in school as well as representing the school in tournaments such as the Herald Cup. The school's relationships and sex education (RSE) and health education programme helps pupils to understand how to be a good friend and what to do if they feel uncomfortable in a relationship.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The newly developed mathematics curriculum is not fully implemented in line with the school's expectations. This means that pupils do not always learn as deeply as they could. The school should continue to ensure that the agreed approaches are used throughout the school, so that pupils' knowledge of mathematics equips them well for future study.

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	133177
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10296344
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	406
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Marie Doyle
Headteacher	Peter Talbot
Website	www.castlehill.kent.sch.uk/
Date(s) of previous inspection	12 and 13 October 2021, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school runs an on-site breakfast club.
- The school currently uses one registered provider of alternative provision.
- The school has a specially resourced provision for 15 pupils with SEND. The provision caters for pupils with a diagnosis of hearing impairment.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the second routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in the evaluation of the school.

- The inspection team met with the headteacher, deputy headteacher and assistant headteacher. They also met with other school leaders, staff and pupils.
- The lead inspector met with seven governors, including the chair of governors. She also spoke with a representative from the local authority.
- The inspection team carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, design technology, computing and geography. For each deep dive, the inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- To inspect safeguarding, the inspection team checked the single central record of recruitment checks and talked to leaders responsible for safeguarding. The inspectors also talked to a range of staff and pupils informally.
- The inspectors considered the responses to the confidential staff and pupil surveys and spoke to a range of staff and pupils about their views of the school.
- The inspectors took account of the 40 responses to the Ofsted Parent View questionnaire and the additional 30 free-text responses. An inspector talked with some parents on the first morning of the inspection.
- The inspection team met with a range of pupils to discuss their views about the school and talked to pupils informally during social times and in lessons.
- The inspectors reviewed a range of documentation, including the school development plan and school self-evaluation.

Inspection team

Sara Staggs, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Lesley Fisher-Pink

Ofsted Inspector

Clive Close

His Majesty's Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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Textphone: 0161 618 8524
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