

# Inspection of an outstanding school: Kingsdown and Ringwould Church of England Primary School

Glen Road, Kingsdown, Deal, Kent CT14 8DD

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Inspection dates:

14 and 15 September 2021

## **Outcome**

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of outstanding as a result of this initial (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might not be as high if a full inspection were carried out now. The next inspection will therefore be a full (section 5) inspection.

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Most pupils almost burst to share the useful and varied things they learn in school. Their confidence, joy and enthusiasm blend with high levels of respect, excellent manners and developing maturity. Pupils behave well.

The school expects much of pupils, inside and outside of lessons. It encourages pupils to learn to be leaders and find their own voice. For example, the 'charity monitors' recently led the school's incredibly successful fundraising for Dementia UK. The spirituality team helped create the beautiful memorial garden. Other possible opportunities include membership of the 'eco' team or becoming a 'house captain'.

Sport is a big part of school life. Pupils can choose to compete, aspiring to represent the school at district, county and national levels. Alternatively, pupils can just enjoy taking part, which is equally encouraged and valued.

Almost everyone is confident that the school prevents or tackles bullying well. The inspector was pleased to learn that the school is currently introducing a system to help keep better records of incidents to make sure that every issue is properly resolved.

The safety, care and nurture of pupils are prioritised above all else. As one pupil put it, 'The teachers always have your back'.

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

The school is ambitious for its pupils. Pupils study interesting and relevant topics, learning and remembering more over time. Overall, pupils are introduced to new things in a

coherent and logical order. At this very early stage of the year, the 'Tiny Tigers' Reception class is prioritising the right areas to lay strong foundations. Carefully chosen activities allow adults to both assess children's starting points and ready them for learning to come.

Teachers check that pupils have remembered what has gone before and help them build on this. Older pupils can explain how their previous learning connects with their current work. This helps them to understand and explain concepts such as democracy, for example.

Leaders and teachers have started to place greater emphasis on what they call 'sticky knowledge'. This is what the school calls the most important things for pupils to remember. However, there is not yet a consistently clear consensus in every single topic about the most important learning points that will lead to a deep understanding over time.

Leaders have already begun to refine subject plans to address this. This work has partly been delayed by the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic. Opportunities to share expertise across the trust were restricted. Nonetheless, leaders know what needs doing and have dedicated time and resources for this.

Teachers' subject knowledge is secure. In mathematics, for example, their precise demonstrations, carefully chosen tasks and clear explanations enable pupils to understand key concepts.

Promoting a love of reading is a top priority and one that is, almost without exception, successful. Pupils enthuse greatly about their reading and embrace challenging texts. Storytelling is a central feature of the early years experience.

However, a few pupils who struggle with learning to read are not as well supported as they could be. Their reading books do not match the sounds they are learning well enough for them to gain fluency and confidence sooner.

In the past, the school has drawn on various resources to teach phonics. This has been enough to ensure almost all pupils have achieved the expected milestones. But leaders and staff are rightly ambitious that every child should learn to read in a timely fashion. Wisely, the school has imminent plans to use a single, consistent phonics approach.

Pupils with identified special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are usually well supported and often take personally significant steps forward. The relatively new special educational needs coordinator has begun important work to tighten processes for identifying and assessing whether pupils who are struggling have underlying SEND.

Almost without exception, pupils' positive behaviour supports their learning. For the most part, pupils' enthusiasm abounds.

The promotion of pupils' wider development is noteworthy. In normal times, there are an extensive range of opportunities. Adults were determined to continue or adapt activities

wherever possible during COVID-19. Leaders are reintroducing activities as soon as possible.

Leaders want the very best for staff and pupils. Adults have worked together to streamline the school's policies and procedures to both benefit pupils and be manageable for staff. For example, the school's approach to assessing pupils' progress focuses sharply on routine daily classroom practice to identify and plug any gaps quickly.

In discussion with the headteacher, the inspector agreed that humanities and/or arts subjects, and the implementation of the new phonics approach, may usefully serve as a focus for the next inspection.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The school has clear processes for identifying and helping pupils or families who may need support. Leaders and governors have prioritised additional staffing capacity dedicated to nurturing and promoting pupils' well-being.

Leaders keep abreast of the ever-changing safeguarding landscape. They source high-quality training beyond statutory requirements. Leaders help staff interpret important elements about potential risks and how these may be relevant in this school or locality.

The management of safeguarding processes is secure. A current change of record-keeping systems has been carefully planned to ensure continuity and to prevent anything falling through the gap as important information is transferred.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- The approach to teaching phonics is not precise enough to ensure that every pupil who struggles to learn to read does so as quickly as they could. These pupils' reading books do not match the sounds they know and are learning closely enough. Leaders should press on with their imminent plans to ensure that all staff follow closely a consistent, rigorous phonics approach and provide pupils with reading books that link more closely to their current stages.
- Leaders and staff have not pinned down the most important knowledge for pupils to learn throughout every subject. In some areas of some subjects, adults do not share a consistent understanding of exactly what this is. Although pupils know and remember more over time, the intended pathway to understanding the most complex concepts in every subject is not as precisely defined as it could be. Leaders have plans in place and have already begun to address these issues. They have invested in time for subject leaders to further refine the curriculum. This work should be continued, ensuring that

how knowledge should build throughout every subject is precisely defined, understood by all, and fully enacted.

- Processes for identifying and assessing why a small number of pupils struggle, including considering whether they may have SEND, are not as tight as they could be. Action has only recently been taken to increase the rigour and timeliness of the school's approach to this area and make it more systematic. Leaders should ensure these recently strengthened procedures are implemented consistently and effectively. This should be aimed at ensuring that all issues are identified and tackled as quickly as possible to help pupils keep up, or catch up, with their peers.

## Background

When we have judged a school to be outstanding, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains outstanding. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good or outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the section 8 inspection as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the predecessor school, Kingsdown and Ringwold Church of England Primary School, to be outstanding in January 2016.

## 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.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

## Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

## School details

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| <b>Unique reference number</b>             | 148308   |
| <b>Local authority</b>                     | Kent   |
| <b>Inspection number</b>                   | 10199507   |
| <b>Type of school</b>                      | Primary  |
| <b>School category</b>                     | Academy converter  |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                 | 4 to 11  |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                    | Mixed  |
| <b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b> | 212  |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>               | Board of trustees  |
| <b>Chair of trust</b>                      | Roger Walton   |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                         | Joanne Hygate (Executive Headteacher)  |
| <b>Website</b>                             | <a href="http://www.kingsdown-ringwould.kent.sch.uk">www.kingsdown-ringwould.kent.sch.uk</a> |
| <b>Date of previous inspection</b>         | Not previously inspected   |

## Information about this school

- Kingsdown and Ringwold Church of England Primary School converted to become an academy school in January 2021. When its predecessor school of the same name was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be outstanding.
- The executive headteacher is also the chief executive officer of DEALT multi-academy trust in Deal, which the school is part of. The school has two assistant headteachers.
- As a Church of England school, Kingsdown and Ringwold is also eligible for inspection under section 48. The last such inspection took place in June 2016. The school had been expecting to be reinspected under section 48 by June 2021, but this has been delayed due to COVID-19. It is now due to be inspected by June 2024.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.

## Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and has taken that into account in his evaluation.

- The inspector met with the executive headteacher, other leaders, governors, staff and pupils.
- To understand the quality of education provided by the school, the inspector examined certain subjects in detail (deep dives). He did deep dives in reading, mathematics and history. This included speaking with leaders, teachers and pupils, visiting lessons, reviewing subject plans and looking at pupils' work in these subjects.
- The inspector took account of the views expressed by 46 pupils, 28 parents and 22 staff through our online surveys.
- The theme of safeguarding was explored in discussions throughout the inspection. The inspector scrutinised safeguarding policies, processes and written records.

### **Inspection team**

Clive Dunn, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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