

All Saints' and St Richard's Church of England Primary School

Address: School Hill, Old Heathfield, Heathfield, East Sussex, TN21 9AE

Unique reference number (URN): 114554

Inspection report: 28 April 2026

Exceptional	
Strong standard	● ●
Expected standard	● ● ● ● ●
Needs attention	
Urgent improvement	

✔ Safeguarding standards met

The safeguarding standards are met. This means that leaders and/or those responsible for governance and oversight fulfil their specific responsibilities and have established an open culture in which safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and concerns are actively identified, acted upon and managed. As a result, pupils are made safer and feel safe.

How we evaluate safeguarding

When we inspect schools for safeguarding, they can have the following outcomes:

- **Met:** The school has an open and positive culture of safeguarding. All legal requirements are met.
- **Not met:** The school has not created an open and positive culture of safeguarding. Not all legal requirements are met.

Strong standard ●

Early years

Strong standard ●

Children have a very positive start to their school journey in the Reception class. Leadership of early years is strong and staff have very secure knowledge and experience. They design the early years provision carefully and review it effectively. The curriculum is clear, well sequenced and closely matched to the needs of all children. Leaders ensure the same level of rigour applies to learning indoors and outdoors. Children access a wide range of purposeful activities throughout the day. They enjoy these activities and engage with them well.

Teaching focuses on high-quality interaction between adults and children. Staff use language carefully and model rich vocabulary. This helps children develop communication skills and confidence when speaking with others. Adults support play thoughtfully and extend learning through well-timed questions and prompts. As a result, children build knowledge, vocabulary and positive learning behaviours. Children who need additional help have their needs identified quickly. Staff provide timely and appropriate support, including for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. This inclusive approach ensures all children can take part fully in the early years curriculum. Children feel safe, happy and well cared for. Their wellbeing and welfare are a clear priority. Children consistently achieve well by the end of Reception. The positive attitudes to learning and to each other that children develop in Reception continue as they move through the school to Year 6.

Inclusion

Strong standard ●

An inclusive culture sits at the centre of the school's ethos and values. Leaders embed it through clear policies, strategies and daily practice. Staff identify, assess and meet pupils' needs swiftly and accurately. They reduce barriers to learning with practical action. A higher proportion of pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities at the school. The school views this as a strength that drives their inclusive ambition. Staff provide timely, effective support, including through well-planned resourced provision and flexible use of alternative strategies where needed.

Pupil premium funding has clear impact because leaders target it carefully to improve attendance, behaviour, wellbeing and academic outcomes for disadvantaged pupils. Leaders and governors check the impact of this funding closely and adjust approaches when needed. The school also supports pupils facing other barriers, including those known or previously known to social care, through clear systems and effective multi-agency work. As a result, pupils attend increasingly well, behave positively and achieve secure progress from their starting points. Although no pupils currently attend alternative provision, leaders have clear plans and wide experience to use it well if required. The school contributes positively to local partnerships for disadvantaged pupils and shares expertise to support inclusion across the school community.

Expected standard

Achievement

Expected standard 

Pupils make positive progress from their starting points. Teaching builds important knowledge in reading, writing and mathematics over time. The school has small year groups and a higher proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), as well as pupils who join at different points throughout the year. Staff respond to this well and include all pupils fully in lessons across the curriculum.

Most pupils achieve outcomes that broadly match national published averages in English and mathematics across the school. This includes disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND. Pupils stay engaged with learning and apply what they know across the whole curriculum with confidence. They demonstrate secure knowledge across a wide range of subjects.

This is shown in how they talk about learning and how they can link ideas together. Teachers help pupils practise key skills often and revisit previous learning. As a result, pupils feel ready for the next stage of their education. They move on with secure knowledge, positive learning habits and a clear understanding of expectations.

Attendance and behaviour

Expected standard 

Leaders have set out a clear approach to attendance and maintain effective contact with pupils and families. Year groups are small and many pupils join the school at different points throughout the academic year. Staff work with families to encourage positive routines and habits around coming to school. This work has helped to improve attendance across the school and for many pupils who may face additional challenges. However, attendance remains variable for a small number of pupils. This includes some pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The school has made progress and can demonstrate some improvement but they are not yet consistently reaching high levels of attendance across the school for all pupils. Leaders track attendance carefully and keep this under close review.

The school provides a calm, inclusive and welcoming environment. Pupils feel safe and valued. Staff and pupils do not tolerate bullying or discrimination of any kind. Adults deal with any concerns quickly, consistently and effectively, including online issues. Leaders keep detailed records of any behavioural incidents and take appropriate action to improve behaviour if needed. Pupils show positive attitudes to learning and treat each other with respect. Lessons run smoothly and pupils settle quickly. The school uses inclusive approaches to behaviour and attendance. Staff make sensible adjustments for pupils with SEND. They focus on being supportive, understanding and providing the right guidance. Pupils with SEND integrate well with peers and feel a clear sense of belonging to the school community.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

The school has a broad and well balanced curriculum, and leaders guide its design with clear intent and direction. They build the curriculum carefully to suit mixed-age classes and to meet the needs of pupils. Leaders support teaching well through focused training on what to teach and how to teach it. Most staff apply this training effectively in lessons. As a result, most pupils secure firm foundations in reading, writing and mathematics.

Teachers check understanding often and help pupils build knowledge step by step. The curriculum includes clear subject plans that link learning over time and support inclusion for all pupils. Staff adapt teaching to meet different needs and ensure pupils can access learning. This helps pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities to learn alongside their peers. Sometimes, teaching does not follow planned content or agreed strategies closely enough. When this happens, pupils miss chances to deepen their learning or practise key skills. Leaders recognise this and continue to support staff to improve consistency across the school.

Beyond English and mathematics the whole curriculum is taught with appropriate subject knowledge. Pupils develop the precise language needed to understand terminology in areas such as art and computing. For example, they learn to describe abstract artistic ideas and to understand simple coding concepts.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard 

Staff and leaders share a clear sense of purpose. Leaders place pupils' best interests at the centre of their decisions and actions. Strategic leadership reflects that all staff share a collective responsibility. Leaders understand the school's strengths. They have identified priorities for improvement carefully and keep these under regular review.

Staff feel valued and supported in their roles. Leaders take workload and wellbeing seriously and respond thoughtfully to staff needs. Staff benefit from a wide range of professional development opportunities that build confidence and expertise in teaching. This learning gives staff fulfilment and helps them to take informed risks in teaching. Leaders provide steady guidance and clear support as staff develop their practice. This approach is especially clear in the support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Staff receive focused training and supervision. This helps them meet pupils' needs with care, confidence and consistency.

The school works actively with its federation and the local authority. Leaders contribute positively to projects and shared initiatives that support improvement beyond the school. Those responsible for governance understand their statutory duties well. Governors stay well informed and hold leaders to account with clarity and purpose. They also offer meaningful challenge and support. Governors support leaders in their work with the local community. The school builds positive, respectful relationships with parents and carers. Leaders communicate clearly and work in partnership with families. They offer support where needed and provide challenge when necessary. This positive engagement supports pupils' learning, wellbeing and success.

Pupils, staff and parents have developed a close bond, which grows from a clear sense of community at the school. Leaders place this work as a clear priority and model it through daily practice and routines. Pupils understand their role within the school and the wider community and show respect for others. They frequently take part in activities that support elderly members of the local community and learn why these links to other generations matter. A carefully planned outdoor learning curriculum helps pupils understand the natural world, local ecology and their responsibility to care for it.

Pupils benefit from a wide range of extra-curricular clubs and opportunities. These build artistic, sporting and musical interests. Leaders take steps to ensure these opportunities are inclusive and accessible to all pupils. Educational visits and experiences are well linked to the curriculum and pupils usually remember these connections. Leaders have recently introduced a refined curriculum for personal, social, health and economic education. This programme is ambitious and thoughtfully adapted so that pupils can access it. Staff identify any barriers for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and remove these effectively.

Relationships and sex education and health education is appropriate and supports pupils to reflect on sensitive topics in a safe way. Teaching includes online and offline risks to wellbeing and safety. Pupils develop a secure understanding of ideas such as consent and healthy relationships.

Pupils learn about different faiths, beliefs and perspectives and most show developing insight into diversity and the protected characteristics that some people have. These experiences support pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development over time. Pupil leaders play a meaningful role in decision making and help others learn about democracy and most other British values. The school cares about the whole child. Pastoral support is timely and responsive. Leaders monitor its impact closely and adapt provision to support pupils' wellbeing and readiness for the next stage of education.

What it's like to be a pupil at this school

Staff work with care and purpose to provide a meaningful education for every pupil at the school. The school has a clear commitment to inclusion. This is a happy school. Pupils speak positively about school and enjoy being part of it. Leaders have created a culture that supports learning, wellbeing, and progress for all.

Pupils feel safe. They trust adults and know that there is always someone to help them. A routine cycle of 'safety weeks' gives pupils the knowledge, skills, and experience and keep themselves safe. Pupils learn how to stay safe online, manage disagreements, and deal with change. They feel confident about life beyond school. Moving on to larger secondary schools does not worry them. Pupils feel safe in school. This helps them to focus, learn, and achieve well.

Pupils behave well. Staff have high expectations for behaviour which pupils understand. They act with kindness and respect. Behaviour is calm and positive across the school. Pupils say bullying is not a concern. They know adults act quickly and fairly if any concerns are reported. Pupils feel listened to and supported. This trust builds a strong sense of belonging to the school community.

Pupils enjoy learning. They take pride in sharing their knowledge across the curriculum. They listen to others and show maturity when classmates need support. They value responsibility. Caring for the school guinea pigs is a highly sought after activity. Pupils share this role and see it as a collective responsibility. They seek help early if needed and learn to be calm and reflective.

Pupils achieve well. They know what they are doing well and what they need to improve. Pupils work towards clear next steps and show motivation and resilience. Many pupils travel long distances to get to school, yet they feel part of a close and caring community.

Next steps

- Leaders should continue to prioritise the attendance of all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities to consolidate current gains and reach consistently high levels of attendance for all pupils.
 - Leader should ensure that teaching focuses clearly on the required knowledge, the needs of pupils and that it systematically checks understanding to secure highly effective standards across the school.
 - Leaders should complete the schools transition to the new personal, social, health and economic education programme ensuring that pupils build a secure and detailed knowledge of its content and themes.
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About this inspection

The chair of the board of governors in this school is Elizabeth Ford.

The school is part of a federation called The Sussex Spires Federation.

Inspectors carried out this full inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Following our renewed inspection framework, all inspections are now led by His Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) or by Ofsted Inspectors (OIs) who have previously served as HMI.

Inspectors spoke with staff, pupils, parents, the diocese, the governors, school leaders and the local authority during the inspection.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

This school is registered as having a Church of England religious character. It is in the Diocese of Chichester. Its last section 48 inspection was in March 2025.

The school currently does not use any alternative provision.

The school has undergone a significant change since the last inspection with the appointment of a new head of school in September 2024.

Executive Headteacher : Catherine Cottingham

Lead inspector:

Toby Martlew, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspector:

Liz McIntosh, Ofsted Inspector

Facts and figures used on inspection

The data was used by the inspector(s) during the inspection. More recent data may have been published since the inspection took place.

 This data is from 28 April 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

87

Well below average

What does this mean?

The total number of pupils currently at this school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

National average: 272

School capacity

140

Below average

What does this mean?

The total number of pupils who can attend the school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

National average: 300

Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)

11.49%

Below average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years.

National average: 26.3%

Pupils with an education, health and care (EHC) plan

4.60%

Close to average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with an education, health and care plan. This covers pupils with more support than is available through special educational needs support.

National average: 3.5%

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support

24.14%

Well above average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with reported special educational support needs at the school.

National average: 15%

Location deprivation

Well below average

What does this mean?

Based on the English Indices of Deprivation (2019) and the school's location, we have calculated whether the school is located in a more or less deprived area.

Resourced Provision or SEND Unit (if applicable)

No resourced provision

What does this mean?

Whether school has Resourced Provision or SEND unit (if applicable).

All pupils' performance

Pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standards in a combined reading, writing and mathematics measure.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	54%	61%	Below
2024/25 (final)	58%	62%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	38%	61%	Below
2022/23 (final)	67%	60%	Close to average

Pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in reading.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	62%	74%	Below
2024/25 (final)	75%	75%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	38%	74%	Below
2022/23 (final)	75%	73%	Close to average

Pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	73%	72%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	58%	72%	Below
2023/24 (final)	77%	72%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	83%	71%	Above

Pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	62%	73%	Below
2024/25 (final)	58%	74%	Below
2023/24 (final)	54%	73%	Below
2022/23 (final)	75%	73%	Close to average

Disadvantaged pupils' performance

Disadvantaged pupils are those who have been eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years and children looked after.

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	38%	46%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	S	47%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	46%	S
2022/23 (final)	S	44%	S

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	50%	62%	Below
2024/25 (final)	S	63%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	62%	S
2022/23 (final)	S	60%	S

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	50%	59%	Below
2024/25 (final)	S	59%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	58%	S
2022/23 (final)	S	58%	S

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	38%	60%	Below
2024/25 (final)	S	61%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	59%	S
2022/23 (final)	S	59%	S

‘S’ in the table above indicates the data has been suppressed, which is usually due to small cohorts. The suppression rules applied by the DfE when publishing the data have been mirrored and applied in the report card.

Disadvantaged pupils' performance gap

Disadvantaged pupils are those who have been eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years and children looked after. The school disadvantage gap is the difference between the performance of the school's disadvantaged pupils compared to the performance of all non-disadvantaged pupils nationally.

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics, including the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	38%	68%	-30 pp
2024/25 (final)	S	69%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	67%	S
2022/23 (final)	S	66%	S

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	50%	80%	-30 pp
2024/25 (final)	S	81%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	80%	S
2022/23 (final)	S	78%	S

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	50%	78%	-28 pp
2024/25 (final)	S	78%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	78%	S
2022/23 (final)	S	77%	S

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	38%	80%	-42 pp
2024/25 (final)	S	81%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	79%	S
2022/23 (final)	S	79%	S

‘S’ in the table above indicates the data has been suppressed, which is usually due to small cohorts. The suppression rules applied by the DfE when publishing the data have been mirrored and applied in the report card.

Absence

Overall absence

The percentage of all possible mornings and afternoons missed due to absence from school (for whatever reason, whether authorised or unauthorised) across all pupils.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (3 term)	8.4%	5.2%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	10.1%	5.5%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	6.4%	5.9%	Close to average

Persistent absence

The percentage of pupils missing 10% or more of their possible mornings and afternoons.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (3 term)	18.3%	13.0%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	25.5%	14.6%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	15.1%	16.2%	Close to average

Our grades explained

Exceptional

Practice is exceptional: of the highest standard nationally. Other schools can learn from it.

Strong standard

The school reaches a strong standard. Leaders are working above the standard expected of them.

Expected standard

The school is fulfilling the expected standard of education and/or care. This means they are following the standard set out in statutory and non-statutory legislation and the professional standards expected of them.

Needs attention

The expected standards are not met but leaders are likely able to make the necessary improvements.

Urgent improvement

The school needs to make urgent improvements to provide the expected standard of education and/or care.

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