

Inspection of Alfriston School

North Road, Alfriston, Polegate, East Sussex BN26 5XB

Inspection dates: 10 and 11 June 2025

The quality of education **Outstanding**

Behaviour and attitudes **Outstanding**

Personal development **Outstanding**

Leadership and management **Outstanding**

Early years provision **Outstanding**

Previous inspection grade Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are proud of their school. They feel safe at Alfriston. They are welcoming to visitors and keen to share their thoughts when asked for an opinion. Older pupils shine in classrooms and display a quiet confidence in their work. Children in Reception get off to a flying start because the quality of the school's early years provision is high.

Pupils thrive here. Adults have high expectations of them and put them first in every way. Pupils achieve very well because of this. Those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are as successful as their peers. Pupils also have high expectations of themselves. They are curious and determined. They are hungry to learn new things. They frown on poor behaviour, which is rare. Mistakes are allowed, but kindness is always expected.

The school's work to enrich pupils' lives and develop their experiences beyond the classroom is noteworthy. Sport, drama and music are a daily feature. Breaktimes are energetic and enlivened further by rehearsals for performances to come. Pupils relish ongoing success in sporting events, often against other schools. Aspirations are limitless. The importance of teamwork and collaboration is understood. Everybody is encouraged to contribute. No one gets left behind here.

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

This is a school where high standards matter. Leaders at all levels have a clear vision for the school. Staff have bought into this and are positive about their work. Those in positions of governance know the school well and provide effective oversight of all aspects of the school's work.

The curriculum meets the needs of pupils extremely well. It has been thoroughly reviewed since the school's last inspection. It encourages pupils to think and learn as artists, geographers and scientists. The curriculum challenges them to think for themselves. It is successful in the school's intention to develop children from early years through to Year 6 as reflective, lifelong learners.

The school's curriculum starts in Reception. Children settle quickly to their journey of learning which is well thought through and delivered by expert staff. Staff help children to understand and follow the routines that are in place. Early barriers to learning are quickly identified and addressed. Staff support children from disadvantaged backgrounds well. The school's excellent early reading and mathematics programmes start here. The impact is clear to see in the confidence children have developed prior to their move into Year 1.

The school's reading programme has been given much thought. It enables pupils to become successful readers while developing their interests across the whole curriculum. Those who struggle with the early stages in becoming fluent readers are supported well. Key staff are skilled and effective in their work to identify gaps and address any obstacles pupils need to overcome. Due to this, pupils love reading. Well-thumbed books of every

kind litter the school. Children in Reception marvel at atlases. Older pupils share their thoughts on favourite authors with total conviction.

Pupils with SEND do well here because their needs are constantly assessed and understood. Staff adapt learning to suit all pupils, though expectations of what can be achieved are equally high for everyone. Notably, pupils themselves are understanding of the needs of others because empathy and respect for difference are actively promoted.

The school's work to prepare pupils for life beyond the school gates is of high quality. Pupils have an age-appropriate understanding of diversity and equalities. The school's personal, social and health education programme is truly bespoke in nature. It prepares pupils well for their transfer to secondary education. This is not least because it has been designed in close partnership with experts from local primary and secondary schools.

Pupils' behaviour and attitudes to school are impressive. They learn how to recognise and cope with anxiety. Strategies such as breathing deeply and 'pressing pause' are known and used successfully when things are not going so well. Character development and building pupils' confidence and resilience have a high priority. Staff actively target pupils with experiences that challenge and extend them. These include opportunities to play a musical instrument and act or sing in front of an audience.

Trips and educational visits are recalled by pupils with excitement. Visits to the opera, canoeing or the local ploughing match are on their list of favourites. Multiple opportunities to lead or contribute to school life are available. The eco committee and school council have a high profile. Older pupils act responsibly because they know they are role models for others in the school.

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	114385
Local authority	East Sussex
Inspection number	10379744
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	79
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Simon Atkins (Co-chair) Yvette Aeberhard (Co-chair)
Headteacher	Lindsey Hudson
Website	www.alfriston.e-sussex.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	15 January 2020, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- This is a small primary school with one Reception class and three mixed-year classes across key stages 1 and 2.
- 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 both co-chairs and the vice chair of the governing body. They also talked to a representative of the local authority on the telephone.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: art and design, early reading and mathematics. 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 the school's pupil council.
- Inspectors considered the views of parents and carers submitted through Ofsted Parent View. The views of staff were also considered through Ofsted's staff survey.

Inspection team

Clive Close, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Nicola Beil

Ofsted Inspector

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