

Kelvedon St Mary Church of England Primary Academy

Dowcra Road, Kelvedon, Colchester, Essex CO5 9DS

Inspection dates 2–3 February 2016

Overall effectiveness **Outstanding**

Effectiveness of leadership and management	Outstanding
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Outstanding
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Outstanding
Outcomes for pupils	Outstanding
Early years provision	Outstanding
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school

- The headteacher and the senior team have successfully created a distinctive, caring ethos in which pupils quickly develop the confidence and skills to thrive academically and socially.
- Governors have an accurate understanding of the quality of education provided across the academy. They provide very effective support and challenge for the senior leadership team.
- Teaching is highly effective. Teachers, who know their pupils well, have very high expectations of what they can achieve. They plan learning which is imaginative and enthuses all pupils.
- Teaching assistants play a significant role in supporting pupils' learning. Their skilful questioning enables the pupils they support to make excellent progress.
- Pupils' personal development and welfare is exceptionally well provided for. Leaders take great care to ensure that pupils' emotional and social skills are well developed. As a result, pupils are resilient and responsible learners.
- This is a happy school where pupils feel extremely safe, and are safe. This is due to the highly effective strategies taken by leaders to ensure that the academy is a warm, welcoming and secure place to learn.
- Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. They demonstrate enthusiasm and maturity in their learning and when at play. Highly positive relationships create an atmosphere in which pupils are not afraid to challenge themselves to achieve their best.
- Pupils achieve well throughout the academy. From their individual starting points, they make rapid and sustained progress.
- Disabled pupils and those with special education needs are very well provided for. As a result, they make outstanding progress from their individual starting points.
- Disadvantaged pupils achieve well. This is due to leaders' effective allocation of government funding to support pupils who may need extra support.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and culture development is a strength of the academy. The rich range of subjects and activities broaden pupils' understanding of the world in which they live.
- Children in the early years make rapid progress. This is due to the very high quality of teaching and care provided for them.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that teachers insist on the highest standards of presentation in all subjects.
- Ensure that the very strong practice of monitoring pupils' work that exists in the core subjects is replicated in all foundation subjects.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is outstanding

- The inspirational headteacher, ably supported by his senior team, has been relentless in his drive to raise standards. All adults and pupils share the ambitious vision, 'to create an environment where every learner has the opportunity to amaze us', which has had a significant impact on improving the quality of teaching, care and outcomes since the last inspection.
- Leaders have established a distinctive school culture, which has an extremely positive influence on the way that pupils behave and learn. Pupils understand and willingly practise the school's values of resilience, responsibility, reflectiveness, reasoning and resourcefulness. Adults and pupils model these throughout the school day. There is a powerful sense of community, something that was clearly evident in the passion and joy with which all pupils sang the school song in assembly. Consequently, pupils and adults have the confidence to be adventurous in their learning. As one pupil informed inspectors, 'this school is one big opportunity'.
- Self-evaluation is detailed and accurate. Leaders are highly reflective and restless to improve, even where the quality of provision is already good or better. They seek the views of pupils, parents and staff when assessing how effective the school is. As a result, they make precise improvements that are widely understood and have a significant impact upon the quality of education provided.
- Leaders have a complete understanding of the quality of teaching across the school. Expectations are exceptionally high where teachers are encouraged to take risks in their teaching. Leaders are not afraid to challenge any practice that does not meet their high expectations. The school makes highly effective use of performance management processes which have had an impact on improving not only the quality of teaching, but also that of leadership across the school.
- The leadership of phonics (the link between sounds and letters) and that of special educational needs are exceptionally strong. Leaders in these areas are meticulous in their assessment of pupils' needs. They make skilful use of this information to plan support for each pupil that helps them to make rapid progress from their individual starting points.
- Teachers and teaching assistants are reflective and welcome the professional freedom that they are encouraged to use. They make full use of training opportunities provided for them. For example, leaders have recently provided training on communication and presentation skills. During the inspection, the high-quality teaching practice that was seen demonstrated that this is having a significant impact.
- Leaders make sure that the broad and balanced range of subjects successfully promotes equality of opportunity and secures good progress. Powerful links across subjects have a significant impact on pupils' ability to apply their skills and knowledge across a range of subjects. For example, in one learning session, pupils were able to draw on their knowledge of history, literacy and science when working on their palaeontology project. The curriculum is rich with opportunities to develop pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness. Culturally themed weeks deepen pupils' understanding of different faiths, cuisine and art, while assemblies encourage tolerance and reflection. Pupils appreciate the opportunities afforded to them, such as the French choir and visits to the Royal College of Music. As a consequence of this provision and the robust transition arrangements, pupils are very well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- Leaders are very effective in providing opportunities for pupils to deepen their knowledge of life in modern Britain. Examples of this include: pupils taking part in elections to select members of the influential school council, hosting events for members of the local community, taking part in interview training for senior staff and having the chance to visit Parliament.
- The primary physical education and sports premium funding is very skilfully used. This funding is used to provide a wide range of sporting opportunities, such as dance, cheerleading and table tennis. In addition, teachers have benefited from specialist training to ensure that the teaching of physical education (PE) is of the highest quality. As a result, very high numbers of pupils take part in sports clubs and the school is developing a strong record of local success across a range of sports.
- The funding to support pupils who are disadvantaged is used to extremely good effect. Leaders make sure that the support is tailored to the specific needs of each child and they monitor the impact with great care. As a result, these pupils make strong progress.
- Middle leaders know what is expected of them. They respond very well to the high expectations placed upon them from the senior leaders. They generally take great care to monitor the progress that pupils are making and are swift to put in place appropriate support for those who need it. However, the monitoring

of the progress of pupils in some foundation subjects is not always of the very high standard found in the core subjects.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- The Chair of the Board ensures that the directors are well led. They are accurate and knowledgeable about the strengths and areas still to be improved in the school, and promote the ethos and vision of the school exceptionally well. They offer clear strategic direction and have the highest expectations for the academy.
- Directors are regular visitors to their link classes and receive regular, detailed reports from senior staff. Directors assure themselves of the accuracy of the information that they are given, holding school leaders to account effectively. They also visit other schools locally and regionally to compare the quality of education in their school and be confident in knowing what best practice looks like.
- The board of directors takes great care to ensure that performance management processes are robust and rigorously carried out in line with the school's policy.

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. There is a clear culture of safeguarding that is evident throughout the academy. The single central record is carefully kept and monitored by the headteacher and directors, as well as through an external audit. Staff are well trained and have a clear understanding of their responsibility to keep pupils safe. The staff responsible for keeping children safe are meticulous in ensuring that statutory policies are carried out.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is outstanding

- The consistently high-quality teaching enables pupils of all abilities to make rapid and sustained progress. This is why the quality of teaching, learning and assessment is outstanding.
- The exceptionally positive relationships that exist are based upon the academy's core values and underpin teaching and learning. Teachers encourage pupils to take responsibility for their own learning and give frequent opportunities for them to do so. For example, in Year 6 mathematics, pupils select their level of challenge appropriate for their ability. They are confident in doing so, demonstrating the resilience to move on to challenges that they know will stretch them even further. Their pride when they are successful is obvious to see.
- Teachers have strong subject knowledge and know their pupils well. They have high expectations of what each pupil can achieve. Teachers use detailed information about what pupils know and can already do, to plan learning activities that interest and challenge all abilities. For example, as a result of the imaginative planning in a Year 6 lesson, pupils demonstrated great maturity as they were able to deepen their knowledge of rationing in World War Two.
- Teachers very skilfully develop learning opportunities that enable pupils to draw on a wide range of skills and understanding from across the curriculum. Pupils in Year 5 were able to explain clearly how their work on Disney helped them to develop their literacy, historical and artistic techniques.
- Teachers and teaching assistants use highly effective questioning skills to accelerate pupils' learning and so develop their maturity and confidence. For example, the teacher's skilful questioning enabled Year 3 pupils to develop a deeper exploration of the arguments for and against hatching the eggs of an extinct species. In another session, a teaching assistant used very well chosen questioning to help pupils discuss their concerns about moving to high school.
- Teaching assistants make a significant contribution to the learning of pupils. For example, aided by the sensitive and firm support of a teaching assistant, one pupil in Year 1 was overjoyed to be able to master his counting of money. In another lesson, the careful and precise guidance of a teaching assistant enabled pupils to make rapid progress in their understanding of phonics, something that was evident in the work seen over time.
- Teachers provide very effective feedback in line with the academy's assessment policy. Pupils respond well to this and are highly motivated to improve their work.
- Reading is taught very well. Pupils confidently use phonetic techniques to read words that are unfamiliar to them. One pupil explained that the academy helps him to 'develop his words'. There is a clear love of reading across the academy. This is helping pupils to make rapid progress across a wide range of subjects.

- Teachers' expectations of how well pupils should present their work is, at times, not high enough in some subjects. This is especially the case when pupils are planning work, and can, at times, mask the excellent work that they produce, particularly in writing.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The academy's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding. Pupils' social and emotional needs are extremely well catered for, a fact appreciated by the overwhelming majority of parents, one of whom explaining that the academy 'does everything it possibly can' to make sure that pupils are happy and safe.
- Pupils relish the additional responsibilities that they are given. The pupil council is an active part of the academy decision-making process. It has instigated changes that have had a considerable impact on the academy day, such as the flexible lunchtimes. Pupils take the role of class 'meeter and greeter' very seriously, welcoming visitors with a firm handshake, together with a clear explanation of the learning that is taking place in each lesson. Consequently, pupils' communication skills and understanding of decision-making processes are very well developed.
- Pupils are safe. They told inspectors that this is a very safe academy, and the overwhelming majority of parents agree. Pupils confidently articulate strategies they use to stay safe when using the internet. Significantly, they are able to explain why this caution is important. Teachers ensure that pupils are taught to understand risks that exist in their surrounding areas. For example, pupils recently visited a building site where they were taught the potential dangers. Pupils can recall these maturely, demonstrating an accurate appreciation of how to behave responsibly in this sort of environment.
- The impact of the academy's excellent work to develop resilient, responsible pupils is very clear. Pupils' attitudes to learning are exceptional in almost all cases. They support each other in their learning; as one pupil told inspectors, 'Together we achieve'. Pupils are not afraid to attempt the more demanding learning challenges. They understand that getting things wrong is part of learning. For example, in phonics, encouraged by the good-natured support of his peers, one boy showed great resilience when tackling increasingly complex sentences.
- Pupils know what bullying is as the result of a comprehensive personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education programme. They found it difficult to recall any examples of bullying at their academy. Inspection evidence, including parent views, supports the fact that bullying is an extremely rare occurrence at this academy. Pupils know who to go to if they have any concerns and are very confident that adults deal with these concerns appropriately.
- Pupils have an age appropriate understanding of how to stay fit and healthy. They learn about healthy diets and the importance of fitness. High numbers of pupils take part in the wide range of sporting activities offered by the academy.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding and makes a significant contribution to the tangible sense of community and strong progress that pupils are able to make. As one pupil explained, reflecting the views of others, 'we behave well because we want to do well'.
- Pupils want to learn. They arrive to each lesson promptly and immediately settle down to their work. Pupils approach each learning activity with cheerful and infectious enthusiasm. They told inspectors that disruption to learning is a very rare occurrence and none was seen over the course of this inspection. The overwhelming majority of parents agree that this is the norm at Kelvedon St Mary Academy.
- Pupils respond exceptionally well to the expectation that they behave in a responsible way around the academy site. For example, Key Stage 2 pupils appreciate the fact that they are given choices about where they can go at break and lunchtime. Behaviour at these times is exemplary. Pupils of all ages mix and play well. They make energetic use of the wide range of facilities, such as the table tennis, football, netball, reading and chalk drawing areas.
- Pupils attend well, with very many rarely missing a day. Absence and persistent absence for all groups of pupils have fallen and are well below national averages. This is due to the fact that pupils enjoy coming to school and also to the tireless efforts of academy leaders to ensure that pupils attend regularly.

Outcomes for pupils

are outstanding

- Children join the Reception class with skills, knowledge and understanding that are broadly typical for their age. From their individual starting points, most children make at least good and sometimes even better progress in all areas of their learning. Consequently, they are well prepared for Year 1.
- Pupils' outcomes in phonics have improved strongly and are a strength of the academy. The proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard is significantly above the national average. Evidence seen on inspection is that this continues to be the case. A highly effective support programme ensures that the small number of pupils who are not successful in Year 1 catch up and are usually successful by the end of Year 2.
- Standards in reading, writing and mathematics at Key Stage 1 are above national expectations, and rising. Current assessment information, supported by lesson observations and a scrutiny of work indicates that this trend is continuing.
- In 2015, outcomes at Key Stage 2 were significantly above national averages in reading, writing and mathematics. This continues to be the case. Evidence seen in lessons as well as in Year 5 and Year 6 pupils' work indicates that, in many cases, they are achieving standards above that expected for their age and ability. The overwhelming majority of pupils make at least good progress in most subjects. Standards in Years 3 and 4 are high, due to the effective teaching that pupils receive.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make outstanding progress from their individual starting points. This is due to the highly effective and precise support that they receive during their time at the academy.
- Disadvantaged pupils make at least good progress and often better. In Reception, these pupils are catching up quickly and make progress that is in line with that of their classmates. In phonics, disadvantaged pupils are closing the gap with their peers rapidly. This continues to be the case throughout the academy. By the time they leave, in writing and mathematics, higher proportions of disadvantaged pupils make expected and above expected progress than other pupils nationally. In reading, the gaps to other pupils nationally are small. Evidence seen on inspection indicates that these pupils continue to make very strong progress from their individual starting points, and where gaps exist, they are closing rapidly. It is clear that the longer that disadvantaged pupils attend the academy, the more rapid the progress they make.
- The most-able pupils make progress above that of their peers nationally. Evidence seen on inspection indicates that this remains the case. Standards are rising, due to the high level of challenge for these pupils. For example, the more-able pupils in a Year 1 class were motivated to make accelerated progress due to the more complex calculations that they were expected to complete.

Early years provision

is outstanding

- Children enter the Reception class with skills and abilities that are broadly typical for their age and leave with skills and abilities above those expected for their age. Where children have lower starting points, including those who are disadvantaged, they make exceptional progress due to the level of support that they receive.
- The outstanding leadership of the early years provision has ensured that children make rapid and sustained progress. The early years leader has an accurate understanding of the quality of education provided and takes swift action to address any areas of weakness. She has established high-quality transition from Reception into Year 1 and, as a result, children are exceptionally well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- Each adult in the early years makes a significant contribution to the children's development. Gentle and skilful questioning enables children to develop their thinking and speaking skills. For example, the thoughtful intervention of a teaching assistant enabled children to practise their mathematical skills when playing a game of snakes and ladders.
- Children enjoy learning in their Reception class. They are highly motivated and confident in their learning. Children make their own decisions about their activities, which many do appropriately and with great confidence. They speak easily about their learning, and are proud of their achievements. For example, children take it in turns to record evidence of the learning that takes place. One girl proudly told inspectors that she was 'taking photos of learning with the iPad'. These pictures were shared with the class at the end of the session, much to their delight.

- Children are safe and very well cared for. They follow the established routines and respond well to teachers' high expectations as they move between the wide range of activities provided for them. They make imaginative use of the interesting and varied outside learning space. Children mix and play well together at break and lunchtimes.
- Children understand the importance of taking turns. They share equipment and practise their drawing and writing skills well together. Adults are adept at spotting children who show skills that are above those expected for their age and planning learning that enables them to make accelerated progress.
- Adults carefully plan the curriculum to meet the needs of the children and provide them with a broad range of learning experiences. The curriculum is enriched by appropriate visits. For example, children visit local garages to compare different cars, carry out traffic surveys and have the opportunity to visit the post office to buy stamps to deliver the cards that they have made.
- Adults meticulously record each child's learning journey in their 'Big Book of Learning'. These confirm the impact that the highly effective teaching is having on the development of skills such as writing, number, and communication. Assessments are of a high quality and evidence seen in these books demonstrates that children make good or better progress.
- Leaders make highly effective use of a range of strategies to engage with parents. Open-door sessions, parent packs and pre-school visits ensure that parents are well informed about the progress that their children are making. The overwhelming majority of parents agree that this is the case.

School details

Unique reference number	139360
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	10010948

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	370
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Andrew Hayman
Headteacher	Mike Walsh
Telephone number	01376 570411
Website	http://www.kelvedonacademy.com/
Email address	admin@kelvedonacademy.com
Date of previous inspection	26–27 September 2011

Information about this school

- Kelvedon St Marys Church of England Academy is a larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The large majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is below national averages.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium is below national averages. This grant provides funding of pupils who are eligible for free school meals and those in the care of the local authority.
- The academy meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed learning in 30 lessons. They observed the teaching of reading and listened to pupils read. Inspectors also visited three assemblies and four tutor sessions.
- Inspectors observed pupils arriving at school and at break and lunchtimes. They also spoke with pupils informally and in a meeting with the school council.
- During the inspection, the views of parents were gathered during informal discussions at the start of the school day. Inspectors also took account of 81 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online survey, as well as 73 free text responses.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, senior and middle leaders, the Chair of the Board of Directors and three other directors, and staff.
- Inspectors scrutinised documents, including the school self-evaluation and improvement plans, safeguarding information, assessment and behaviour records and minutes of the Board of Directors' meetings.

Inspection team

John Lucas, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Heather Hann	Ofsted Inspector
Michael Jude	Ofsted Inspector
Terence Flitman	Ofsted Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making a complaint about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2016

