

Colne Engaine Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Green Farm Road, Colne Engaine, Colchester, Essex CO6 2HA

Inspection dates

7–8 June 2017

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The headteacher is a passionate and visionary leader who has moved the school forward significantly since its previous inspection.
- Very well-defined values underpin the school's work. These have a powerful impact on the way that staff, pupils and governors go about their day-to-day work. They all develop and sustain excellent relationships with others.
- Pupils' thrive in a climate of care where they feel safe and are valued as individuals. They are challenged and supported in equal measure to be the best they can. Hence, pupils' personal development and behaviour are excellent.
- Most pupils, including the most able, make good progress across a wide range of subjects. They make particularly strong progress in writing and in their speed and skill in handling numbers in mathematics.
- Pupils are taught effectively to read, and younger ones rapidly develop skills in using phonics when learning to read.
- The school is focusing well on helping pupils to analyse and question the texts they read. However, leaders know such skills are not fully embedded and more pupils need to understand what they are reading in greater depth.
- Teaching is good and enables pupils to make good progress in their learning. Teaching staff have consistently high expectations of pupils' work and of what they can achieve.
- Pupils are challenged well by the work they are given, especially in mathematics. However, staff are not yet systematic enough in teaching pupils how to explain mathematical ideas. This sometimes slows learning, especially for a few of the most able girls
- The provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is highly effective in meeting their needs.
- Children in the early years get a good start to their education. They enjoy the rich range of practical activities, often becoming totally absorbed in exploring a problem or new idea.
- The curriculum provides strong opportunities for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Its focus on developing the 'whole child' results in well-rounded youngsters who are confident, self-assured, thoughtful and very well prepared for future life.
- Governors provide good oversight of the school's work and ask searching questions to ensure that its performance is good enough.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the standards of work further in mathematics by ensuring that:
 - teachers are more systematic in the way that they teach pupils to explain mathematical ideas and to explain why the methods they are using work
 - the most able girls currently in the school achieve as well as the boys in mathematics.
- Help pupils to make faster progress in reading by:
 - continuing to press ahead with the work being done on teaching pupils how to analyse and delve more deeply into the texts that they are reading
 - ensuring that this work is well embedded across the school.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher provides strong leadership and is very well supported by her deputy. Working closely with the deputy headteacher, she has successfully established a culture of high expectations where staff, pupils and governors all strive to achieve the highest standards possible.
- The headteacher and the deputy headteacher ensure that the school's values are deeply embedded in its work and underpin all its key policies and plans. Equality, fairness and diversity are tangible in the way that the school tailors provision around the needs of individual pupils. Consequently, pupils from all backgrounds flourish.
- Staff work successfully as a team towards common goals. Effective systems and well-established procedures support them and the school's work extremely well.
- Processes for checking the quality of the school's work, including the quality of teaching and learning, are robust. The headteacher and deputy know the school well and have an accurate understanding of its strengths and areas for development.
- Subject leaders for English and mathematics play an important role in monitoring the provision, including teaching and learning, and outcomes in their areas. Consequently, these leaders have a good understanding of the impact of their work on the school's performance and of where further improvements are needed.
- New leaders and staff are being well supported to establish and develop their roles. The school provides good training and professional development for staff at every level. It works well with other schools to ensure that staff in the school are as up to date as possible on best practice and have good opportunities to learn from others.
- The provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is comprehensive, and support is very thoughtfully tailored around each pupil's needs. Pupils are assessed with care and thoroughly, so that the school has an in-depth understanding of all aspects of their special educational needs and/or disabilities. This informs planning very effectively. Parents are involved as key partners in identifying and supporting their child's needs. Funding for special educational needs is spent with care and spent well. Some is used to purchase additional external support if needed.
- The pupil premium funding is used very effectively to support the very small number of disadvantaged pupils in the school. The school's pupil premium plan for the current year is thorough. It identifies and appropriately addresses the main barriers to learning. The headteacher evaluates the impact of the school's work with disadvantaged pupils to make sure that the way in which funding is used helps to remove barriers to learning.
- The school's curriculum is developing well and is an emerging strength. It provides particularly vibrant and rich opportunities for pupils' personal development, including learning about British values, such as democracy. For example, during the inspection, pupils in Years 5 and 6 had the opportunity to work in groups to set up their own political party and a manifesto to achieve their party's key aims.

- The school places strong emphasis on teaching science and on developing scientific knowledge and understanding through practical and investigative work. Work in subjects such as art and design and design and technology are built in well through the interesting topics that pupils study, such as 'imagineers' and 'being a game changer'. The topics are planned well and include systematic development of pupils' skills, including higher-level thinking skills, and the opportunities for pupils to develop their own lines of enquiry into a particular aspect of the topic that they are studying.
- A good range of extra-curricular activities and clubs help to enrich the curriculum further. Pupils enjoy a range of sporting activities and the sports premium is used well to provide these as well as sports coaches and teachers to help to develop pupils' physical fitness and enjoyment of sport.
- The local authority provides good support to the school, and the headteacher makes effective use of the expertise of local authority personnel to help her to continue to improve the school.
- The vast majority of parents are very positive about the school and what it does, or has done, for their children. One parent's comment, that this is a 'great school, caring and supportive to families as well as children', reflects the views of many others and the school's strong sense of community.

Governance of the school

- The governing body carries out its responsibilities well. Members are well informed about the school's work partly because they receive good-quality information from the headteacher, and because they visit the school regularly to see for themselves how well agreed policies and procedures are being implemented.
- To support their work, governors have established effective committees. Members ask robust questions at meetings and when they visit, to find out more about the school's work and its performance.
- The governing body has a good understanding of the quality of teaching in the school and the academic performance of pupils. Governors are ambitious for the school to continue to improve and for achievement to be even better.
- Governors promote equality of opportunity and fairness very effectively through the way in which they ensure that funding is used appropriately, especially additional funding, such as pupil premium or special educational needs funding, to address any barriers to learning or personal development.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Safeguarding records are robust and show that swift action is taken when any concern is logged about a pupil's welfare, care or safety. The school works effectively with a wide range of external services and professionals to ensure that pupils are safe. In addition, the headteacher ensures that there is good support for families where needed.
- The school applies rigorous procedures when recruiting new staff or volunteers,

including governors, to ensure that all those appointed are suitable to work with children. Staff are well trained on a wide range of safeguarding matters. Hence, they know what to look for and are quick to flag up any concerns, no matter how small.

- A climate of respect and care for others promotes safety and safeguarding well across the school. Pupils as well as staff look out for one another.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- The quality of teaching and learning is consistently good across the school. In particular, staff have universally high expectations of the quality of pupils' work and of how it is presented. The tasks and activities that teachers provide help pupils to extend their understanding well and deepen their learning. These tasks and activities are put together thoughtfully so that they enable pupils to build well on previous learning.
- Teachers work in good partnership with teaching assistants and ensure that they brief them well about the lesson's objectives and the learning that they want pupils to achieve. Teaching assistants provide good support to pupils, both in lessons and when they work with them on a one-to-one basis or in a small group. Often they are working with pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, and they are skilled in helping them to take the small steps needed to be successful in their learning.
- Teachers and teaching assistants are good at posing questions and at using follow-up questions to extend pupils' thinking and probe their understanding more deeply. This helps pupils to think through ideas, especially when they are dealing with more complex concepts.
- Work provided to pupils is pitched at a good level for different ability groups. The most able pupils are challenged well and rarely find the work too easy. Sometimes in mathematics, however, work is a bit too hard, especially for some of the most able girls, because it has not been broken down enough. However, overall, teachers are effective in ensuring that the most able pupils are given the right level of challenge and that they make good gains in their learning.
- Teachers are adept at teaching phonics and ensuring that pupils and children in Reception develop their skills in using phonic knowledge to read new or unknown words as well as to help them work out how to spell words correctly. Pupils across the school are encouraged to read a wide range of good-quality literature as well as non-fiction texts that support topic work and work in subjects such as science.
- Teachers focus well on developing pupils' comprehension skills, so that they improve their ability to analyse, for example, character and plot and to read between the lines. The school acknowledges that this work is not yet complete and that it needs to continue with the strategy in order to speed up learning for more pupils.
- Basic skills in mathematics are taught well, and teachers make good use of practical equipment and resources in lessons to help pupils to understand more difficult mathematical ideas. Pupils are given a wide range of problems to solve and taught the methods for tackling these in a systematic way. However, teaching staff are not as systematic in developing pupils' ability to explain mathematical ideas as they are in promoting their skills in solving problems and manipulating numbers.

- Teachers provide pupils with good opportunities to apply their mathematical knowledge and skills in other subjects. Hence, for example, pupils make good use of graphs in subjects such as science, history and geography to display their findings or data that they have collected.
- Pupils have good opportunities for developing their writing skills in English and other subjects of the curriculum. They regularly practise writing for a wide range of purposes and audiences in subjects such as science, history, geography and religious education.
- Staff follow the school's marking and assessment policy effectively. The feedback that they provide to pupils helps them to improve learning. Teachers are clear, through their diligent assessment of pupils' work, about any gaps in knowledge and understanding that they need to address next lesson.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding. Pupils have extremely positive attitudes to learning and are keen to do well. In lessons, they are often totally engrossed in their work and demonstrate high levels of concentration. Pupils willingly work hard and put in the effort to achieve their very best. Their highly positive attitudes to learning have a strong impact on their good and improving rates of progress.
- Pupils discuss their work confidently and explain what they are doing and their learning outstandingly well. They know their strengths and weaknesses and have a clear idea of how to improve. The school's own model of learning skills, BEN (become experts now), provides pupils with a 'toolbox' to help them to develop good learning habits. For example, one pupil in Year 6 talked about using the 'hard hat' because she wanted to challenge herself and, as she put it, 'push myself out of my comfort zone'.
- Older and younger pupils play and interact together very harmoniously. Pupils have a strong sense of belonging, and the school ethos is that of a unified community working together for the benefit of all.
- The school's values, equality, respect, integrity, compassion, empathy and responsibility (ERICERs), are exceptionally well understood by pupils. They use these as key principles to guide their behaviour and their attitudes towards others, and indeed life. This was most evident during the mock election, when pupils in the Years 5/6 class set up their own political parties and produced manifestos. These included policies and plans to promote equality and a good education for all children alongside good future work prospects.
- Overall, pupils are responsible, thoughtful and respectful. They show compassion for those who are in need or who are encountering difficulties in life. Pupils' social skills are excellent and they engage in conversation and debate in a very open and honest way. Pupils express their opinions in a measured and thoughtful manner while listening carefully to others. They demonstrate significant capacity to consider alternative perspectives and weigh up different options. These personal skills mean that pupils

work extremely well with others in lessons to improve their learning.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. In lessons, pupils cooperate with teachers and other adults exceptionally well. They get on with their work and waste no time and, certainly, no lesson time is lost due to issues of behaviour.
- The school uses rewards and sanctions very effectively to encourage good behaviour. Pupils know what happens if they do not behave well. They understand the school rules and, more importantly, they have an exceptionally good understanding of the consequences of bad behaviour. Overall, pupils behave well because they want to.
- The school's values, ERICERS, underpin the behaviour in the school but also the very high levels of respect that pupils show to one another and their clear understanding of right and wrong. Pupils value diversity and know not only that it is wrong to be racist or sexist, for example, but also why.
- Pupils are adamant that bullying is not an issue in the school but, should it ever occur, they are confident that staff will deal with it swiftly.
- Staff manage behaviour well. They are particularly skilled in working with pupils who have behavioural special educational needs, to modify their behaviour.
- Pupils are very well cared for and looked after. Consequently, they feel completely safe at school. All parents responding to the Ofsted survey agreed that their children are safe at school.
- The school is rigorous in pursuing any pupils whose attendance is low or starts to slip. Current attendance levels are high, and very few pupils are absent too frequently. Last academic year, attendance was above average.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Most pupils currently in the school are making good progress, and progress is particularly strong in Years 5 and 6. Outcomes are improving and have been improving well since the last inspection. They are continuing to improve as gaps in pupils' prior learning, due to issues of teaching and staffing instability in the past, are being closed.
- Results in the end of key stage 2 tests in 2016 were broadly in line with national averages. Most pupils made the same progress as pupils nationally who had the same starting points, and many made better or accelerated progress. Some of the most able pupils, however, made less effective progress in reading and mathematics than others. Results in writing were good.
- At the end of key stage 1 tests and assessments in 2016, pupils' performance was broadly in line with national averages. Most pupils made good progress from their starting points. A higher proportion of Year 2 pupils at the school than nationally met the greater depth standard in reading.
- The school's outcomes in the phonics screening check were above average in 2016 with all pupils meeting the expected standard. Current Year 1 pupils are on track to

achieve above-average results again this year.

- Current pupils in Year 6 are on track to exceed last year's national averages in reading, writing and mathematics. Across both key stages 1 and 2, pupils are making good progress in all three areas.
- The most able pupils are extended well and, across the school, are making consistently good or better progress in reading and writing. Hence, they are working at the greater depth standard in these. In mathematics, the great majority of the most able pupils are making good progress and attaining the greater-depth standard. The most able boys are doing better than the most able girls, some of whom are not making as much progress as others.
- In reading, pupils are developing good technical skills and read fluently and accurately. They are good at breaking words down to read them correctly. Pupils are reading books that challenge them and are developing increasingly secure skills in analysing the texts they are reading. However, fewer are making accelerated progress in reading than in writing and mathematics. School leaders link this to weaker development of comprehension skills in the past, which they are now focusing on with greater rigour.
- Pupils' writing is developing very well and they produce increasingly more sophisticated and refined writing as they move through the school. The very good opportunities for writing across other subjects help to develop pupils' writing abilities very well and enable them to practise and hone their skills.
- Pupils are confident about solving mathematical problems. They have a wide array of methods for handling numbers that they draw on to help them to tackle a good range of problems. Pupils are good at explaining these methods and talk coherently about the work that they are doing. However, they are less confident about explaining some of the mathematical ideas they are using or applying. For example, Years 3 and 4 pupils could identify parallel lines but were not all able to explain what made them parallel; in Years 5 and 6, pupils could explain what they had to do to draw a pie-chart using a set of data that they had been given, but many could not say how this method worked.
- The very small number of disadvantaged pupils are making good progress and achieving outcomes similar to others. In 2016, in tests and assessments across key stage 2 and the phonics screening check, disadvantaged pupils performed well and there were no significant difference in outcomes compared to others in the school or nationally. There were no disadvantaged pupils in key stage 1 last year.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are very well supported. They have detailed and robust plans that break down the work they are doing into small steps or stages, which are easier for them to achieve. Consequently, they are making strong progress, given their individual needs. They are making particularly good progress in their personal development and oral skills.
- Relatively few pupils demonstrate low levels of attainment, and pupils' written work shows that most of those who are not yet at the expected standard are not far behind age-related expectations.
- Pupils are making good progress in a wide range of other subjects as well as in English and mathematics. Work in science includes a strong focus on investigative and experimental skills, which pupils are developing well. Pupils in Years 5 and 6, for

example, very competently put forward their own hypotheses for factors that will influence plant growth and then test these out.

- Artwork on display and in pupils' sketchbooks is of high quality. Pupils are developing good skills in enquiry in subjects such as history and geography and learning to code in computing. They are keen on sports and actively participate in physical education lessons as well as clubs after school and fixtures with other schools.

Early years provision

Good

- Children begin at the school with skills and knowledge that are broadly in line with their ages. They make good progress and most achieve a good level of development, with some exceeding this standard. Children are well prepared for Year 1 by the end of their Reception year.
- Over the past three years, the proportion of pupils achieving a good level of development has increased and, over the last two years, this has been above average. It is on track to be above average again this year.
- Leaders have ensured that the recent change in the staffing of the Reception class has been managed in as seamless a way as possible. The new teaching team is now well in place and providing good-quality provision for children.
- The quality of teaching is good, and children are provided with a good range of practical activities that motivate them and engage their interests. Consequently, children become fully involved in activities that help to promote their early learning skills.
- Boys, in particular, are highly enthused by the opportunities to experiment and solve problems. For example, when making boats, they excitedly tested their models to see how well they would float and suggested ideas for improving them.
- Boys and girls are making good progress and developing good early skills in reading, writing and mathematics. Children enjoyed, for example, creating their own little booklets about sea animals, such as sea lions and whales. They looked at books, talked to adults and one another to help them to develop their own ideas to write about.
- Adults pay very good attention to developing children's language and communication skills. They use good questioning and take every opportunity to point out key words and language that they want children to use.
- The outdoor area is used effectively and has been developed well since the last inspection. The early years provision is well supported by its work with Forest Schools and regular, planned visits to a nearby wooded area where children can explore a natural environment and learn from it.
- Teachers challenge children well to think more creatively and to extend themselves. Children respond well to this. The most able children are encouraged to tackle more difficult work and are moving forward well in their learning as a result.
- The teaching team assesses children's progress effectively and uses information from this to plan the next steps in learning. Key achievements are carefully recorded in learning journals and shared with parents.

- Children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are well supported, and work is carefully tailored to their needs.
- Children are happy in the Reception class and enjoy their time there. They behave well and get on well with one another. Children sustain good levels of concentration when working on a task and see it through before moving onto the next one. The girls are not always quite as well focused as boys who often become completely absorbed in their work.
- Children are well cared for in Reception. Safeguarding and welfare arrangements are effective.

School details

Unique reference number	115135
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	10031369

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	105
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Godfrey Evans
Headteacher	Julie Sarti
Telephone number	01787 222717
Website	www.colneengaine.essex.sch.uk/
Email address	admin@colneengaine.essex.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	25 February 2015

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school is much smaller than other schools nationally.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium is below average.
- Nearly all pupils are White British and none speaks English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is well above average. An above-average proportion of pupils have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan.
- The school meets the government's floor standards. These are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.

- The staffing, particularly of teaching staff, has changed significantly since the previous inspection.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed learning in all classes. Most of these observations were conducted jointly with the headteacher.
- The inspector held meetings with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher and subject leaders. She also met with a group of three governors, including the chair of governors. The lead inspector spoke over the telephone to two officers from the local authority, who have been working with the school.
- The inspector spoke informally to pupils in lessons and around the school, and held discussions with two groups of pupils, one from each key stage. She listened to some younger pupils reading to check how well they are developing their reading skills.
- In carrying out the inspection, the inspector took account of 39 responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire, 'Parent View', and the written comments submitted by a number of these parents. She also spoke with parents as they dropped off their children at school.
- The inspector also took account of the responses to Ofsted questionnaires completed by 15 staff members and 27 pupils.
- The inspector observed the work of the school. She looked at the school's improvement plan, a range of policies and procedures, documents relating to the work of the governing body and the arrangements for ensuring that pupils are safeguarded. Documentation reviewed included records of assessment, and information relating to pupils' attainment and progress, behaviour and attendance. The school's website was also checked.

Inspection team

Gulshan Kayembe, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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