

St Osyth Church of England Primary School

Norman Close, St Osyth, Clacton-on-Sea, Essex CO16 8PN

Inspection dates

14–15 May 2019

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Requires improvement
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Although improving, the quality of teaching and learning varies too much. This is especially the case in subjects other than English and mathematics. Pupils' achievement is not yet good across the school.
- Pupils do not have access to activities that help them build their knowledge, understanding and skills in a wide range of subjects.
- Leadership of subjects other than English and mathematics is not yet established. Therefore, leaders do not know well enough the quality of teaching and learning in subjects such as science, history and geography.
- A significant number of parents and carers do not have a positive view of school leaders' work.
- Inconsistent teaching means that pupils do not make sufficient progress in key stage 1 and lower key stage 2 in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils have too much to catch up on in Years 5 and 6.
- Children in the early years, including those who are disadvantaged, do not make strong progress from typically low starting points. Planning for what they need to learn next lacks precision.
- Not all teachers set high expectations for what pupils can do. In some year groups, pupils do not take pride in their work. Presentation is poor and handwriting is untidy.
- Teachers do not always help pupils, including the most able, to improve their work in a timely fashion.

The school has the following strengths

- Governors and senior leaders are bringing about rapid improvement. They have an accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses and know well what needs improving.
- Staff are proud to work at the school. They are positive about the many changes that have taken place to improve the school.
- Pupils are happy, polite, sociable and courteous. Leaders place a high priority on keeping pupils safe. Pupils say they feel safe.
- Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and those who are disadvantaged are supported well to attend school so that they can access their learning with increasing confidence.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of leadership and management by:
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to develop their knowledge, understanding and skills across the curriculum
 - developing subject leadership to extend beyond English and mathematics
 - finding ways to share school leaders' effective work with parents.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by ensuring that:
 - teachers plan work at the right level so that it engages and meets the needs of all pupils
 - the quality of teaching improves in reading, writing and mathematics
 - teachers help pupils to improve their work more quickly
 - the quality of teaching improves in subjects other than English and mathematics to meet the expectations of a broad and balanced curriculum
 - all teachers have high expectations of what pupils can do and how they present their work.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment in the early years by:
 - identifying exactly what children need to learn next
 - planning suitable activities to enable children, especially disadvantaged children, to make good progress from their individual starting points.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Since the school converted to academy status in June 2016, there have been significant staffing changes. Leaders' work has been prioritised to securing an experienced leadership team and stable workforce to raise standards across the school. The new leadership team has an accurate view of the school and a clear understanding of pupils' needs. Leaders have capacity to improve the school further.
- Leaders have not developed a curriculum that is rich and varied. Although there is coverage for some subjects, this is not yet broad enough. It does not routinely give opportunities for pupils to build on prior knowledge or to develop necessary skills in subjects such as science, music, history and geography.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is beginning to develop. Class and whole-school assemblies focus on values such as being grateful and the importance of coming to school. Pupils recognise privilege and appreciate their learning opportunities. Pupils benefit from additional trips to add interest and experience in subjects across the curriculum. Pupils can discuss their views confidently about religions and the similarities between their own beliefs and those of others. However, although school leaders promote school values in their daily times of collective worship, some pupils found difficulty in expressing them.
- Senior leaders use a variety of tools to routinely check the quality of teaching, learning and assessment in English and mathematics. Leaders' monitoring has identified whole-school weaknesses that have led to training for all staff through weekly school improvement meetings.
- Leaders have taken effective action to identify and address the gaps in pupils' learning to help them to catch up by the time they leave the school. As a result, pupils' attainment in writing improved significantly for Year 6 pupils in 2018 and for many current pupils.
- Leaders ensure that teaching staff are accountable for the progress pupils make. Leaders set high expectations and rigorously monitor the quality of teaching and learning. Significant staff turnover has hampered the rapid improvement needed in the quality of teaching over the last year.
- The leader of physical education (PE) has high aspirations for pupils and has developed a PE curriculum that is very rich and inclusive. Funding is used well to ensure that pupils participate in a wide range of sports and competitions. Team teaching and high-quality training have helped teachers develop their skills. In addition, there has been an increase in the number of pupils taking part in a wider range of clubs and competitions.
- The new leader for the provision for pupils with SEND ensures that the care and support offered to pupils who have very specific needs are well managed. Additional funds are increasingly well spent and focused on meeting needs more precisely.
- The trust provides a wide range of professional development for leaders across the trust. This year, there are firm plans to support the development of middle leadership

so that this important leadership group benefits from sharing good practice.

- Leaders use pupil premium funding effectively to support the high number of disadvantaged pupils in the school. Leaders' spending is clearly allocated. Smaller teaching groups and language classes for some pupils are having a positive impact on pupils' engagement and learning. Learning mentors, pupil counselling and family support workers are helping reduce pupils' anxieties and worries so that more pupils attend school all the time and access their learning with confidence.
- Some parents are understandably frustrated by the high staff turnover over the past few years. However, leaders' actions have successfully stabilised teaching staff so that the school can continue to improve with a full teaching team. Leaders have not always communicated to parents well enough what the school does well.
- Some parents are beginning to recognise the effectiveness of leaders' work. For example, one responded: 'I'm now amazed at how the school has progressed under the new management and teaching team. The school has worked really hard and I personally feel this is reflected in how my daughter's experience has changed for the better.' This was echoed by another, who said: 'I have seen a distinct improvement in my child's learning and in other areas of learning, such as trips and other opportunities. The school overall feels as though it has improved very much.'

Governance of the school

- Governance is effective. The local governing body is fully supportive of school leaders and the improvements already made. Governors have an accurate view of the school and what it needs to do to improve. They know their community well and take a very active role in school life. They are keen to gain as much knowledge so that they can carry out their roles and responsibilities to the best of their ability.
- Governors bring a range of individual skills and experiences to the school and make regular visits, meeting with leaders, speaking with pupils and observing teaching and learning. They provide purposeful reports to the governing body and ask challenging questions of school leaders. For example, governors' notes raised concerns about parental worries and the need to develop the wider curriculum.
- Governors recognise that some parents are concerned about the staff turnover in recent months. The governing body is rightly looking at ways to communicate the effective work leaders are doing at the school.
- Governors know how the pupil premium funding is allocated. However, they are less clear about what is working well and making a difference to outcomes for disadvantaged pupils.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective and pupils are safe.
- School leaders carry out appropriate checks when recruiting new staff and keep records in suitable order.
- Staff are trained and know what to do if they are worried about a pupil. They raise concerns appropriately, using the school's procedures effectively. The designated

safeguarding staff work well with external organisations to ensure that the appropriate action is taken. School child protection records are well maintained and action is followed up where necessary.

- Almost all parents who responded to Ofsted’s online parent questionnaire, Parent View, and all those spoken with agree that the school keeps their children safe. Well-placed posters and notices around the school ensure that everyone is informed of who to speak to if they have concerns.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment varies too much across the key stages and subjects. Work in pupils’ books demonstrates that not enough pupils receive learning activities that are well matched to their skills and abilities. Where teachers have established routines and consistent expectations across the curriculum, pupils learn and work well together. In these classes, pupils are making better progress over time.
- Some teachers do not consistently follow the school’s assessment policy. In these instances, it is difficult to see where pupils have had opportunities to improve their work. In some books, mistakes are not picked up and, therefore, repeatedly made. As a result, pupils, including the most able, are not making the progress of which they are capable.
- Not all teachers have high enough expectations of what pupils can do in English and mathematics. This hinders pupils from making the good progress they should in these subjects. In addition, not all teachers promote high expectations of pupils’ presentation. The quality of writing and content varies widely across the school.
- Teachers in some classes do not plan learning activities that effectively meet pupils’ needs. In these lessons, pupils lose interest, fidget and chat among themselves. As a result, learning time is lost and pupils’ progress is hindered.
- Grammar skills are taught effectively. Most pupils are using a wide range of punctuation and applying grammar skills well by the time they leave the school. However, topic books show that pupils do not always get enough opportunities to practise these skills across a wide range of contexts.
- The leader of mathematics identified pupils’ number skills as a weakness across the school. Pupils did not have a good understanding of place value (the value of each digit in a number) to build on. A school focus on developing pupils’ number and quick recall skills has ensured that pupils are far more confident in tackling more complex problems. Focusing on problem-solving and reasoning is now a priority.
- Topic and science books reflect the limited time dedicated to teaching the wider curriculum and do not show that pupils learn sufficiently across a range of curriculum areas. Much of what is taught is knowledge-based and does not include the teaching of skills. Pupils enjoy topics such as the Second World War, India and the solar system but these do not build on pupils’ prior learning sequentially or extend into other areas of the curriculum.
- Where there is stronger practice over time, for example in upper key stage 2, pupils are making better progress and catching up on lost learning in previous years. In these

classes, teachers choose imaginative and successful ways to engage pupils in writing. Pupils work conscientiously and practise their skills well, using rich vocabulary and using words effectively in their writing.

- Leaders have raised the profile of reading by introducing pupils to a wide range of high-quality texts. There is a strong focus on developing pupils' vocabulary across the school and in key stage 2 in particular. This has successfully transferred into pupils' writing, which is generally of a high standard. Teachers have identified gaps in pupils' understanding and have brought in programmes to support pupils' comprehension skills further down the school. This is enabling pupils to catch up and, for current pupils, attainment is improving.
- Pupils who are disadvantaged and those with SEND are supported well in class. Additional adults are skilled at supporting them to do the best they can in smaller groups so that they can access their learning with confidence.
- The teaching of phonics is given a high priority. Precise teaching helps pupils to consolidate learning and develops pupils' confidence in tackling unfamiliar words. Teachers give many opportunities for pupils to practise saying, reading and writing sounds.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. All pupils spoken with said that they are happy and well cared for and enjoy learning.
- Pupils told inspectors that they feel safe in school and most parents agreed. Pupils are taught about issues of bullying, including online bullying, and know what to do if they have worries. Pupils speak maturely when they share their views regarding the subject of bullying and how confident they are that staff deal with any issues that arise.
- Some parents expressed concerns, when responding to Parent View, about how effectively the school deals with bullying. Inspectors found no evidence to support their concerns. Leaders have plans to share the work they do on dealing with bullying with parents.
- Leaders provide precise support to vulnerable pupils and families. Well-deployed and skilled adults support pupils with counselling, mentoring and family support. This enables pupils to develop self-esteem and confidence in readiness for their learning.
- Pupils enjoy responsibilities, such as being elected for the school council, and spoke thoughtfully about their care for the environment. They participate positively in collective worship and confidently discussed their views on different religions.
- Pupils are very thoughtful and reflective. Year 5 pupils spoke positively about what has improved in the school, commenting that there is more support now for pupils who sometimes find learning difficult.
- Pupils have clear ideas about what they would like to do when they leave school and they recognise the importance of working hard. One pupil spoke about his love of science and said that he wanted to find a cure for illnesses. He recognised he would need to study biology and chemistry. Others said that they would like to be

accountants, bakers and teachers.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- Pupils are confident, polite and well mannered. Good relations and friendships are evident at playtimes and lunchtimes as pupils mix happily together.
- Most pupils demonstrate good conduct in lessons. However, when teaching is not pitched at the correct level, pupils become chatty and disruptive. On too many occasions, pupils are slow to respond to adults' instructions.
- Attendance was just below national averages for 2018. Leaders follow up on any pupil who does not reach the high targets set for attendance. Although there have been some successes, leaders recognise that more needs to be done to improve attendance.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Although there has been recent improvement in some pupils' progress and attainment, they are not consistently good for most pupils, including the most able and disadvantaged pupils.
- In 2018, reading progress for pupils in key stage 2 was in the bottom 20% for all schools. Attainment for reading was below the national average and only in line with the national average at key stage 1. Mathematics attainment was below national averages for both key stages.
- Pupils' topic work is limited and, in some year groups, work is poorly presented. Leaders do not know how well pupils achieve in subjects other than English and mathematics. Leaders are rightly ensuring that pupils are gaining knowledge and acquiring a wide range of skills across all subject areas.
- The proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check is improving over time and is broadly in line with the national average.
- Because the quality of teaching, learning and assessment over time is improving, pupils are currently making better progress in upper key stage 2, particularly in writing. Therefore, pupils' attainment, as seen in their books, is rising.
- Pupils with SEND are closely monitored. They are supported effectively to make steady progress from their different starting points.

Early years provision

Requires improvement

- Some children start Reception with skills and abilities that are below those typical for their age. Leaders' actions have not been urgent enough to ensure that children make sufficient progress to catch up and to ensure that their specific needs are met quickly enough. This is particularly the case for children who are disadvantaged.
- Not all adults notice and intervene in a timely way to develop children's learning effectively. As a result, many opportunities to develop children's skills and

understanding are not acted upon.

- Leaders' systems for assessing children's progress do not show clearly the progress for children over time. As a result, it is difficult to see exactly what children's next steps should be and how meeting them will be achieved.
- Recognising that pupils in Year 1 were not building on their learning in early years as well as they should, and therefore were not prepared well enough for learning in Year 1, leaders are making changes to transition arrangements. It is too early to assess the impact of this work.
- Phonics is taught well in early years. Children make good progress in reading. However, children's writing progress is not captured well enough in children's work to show the good progress they make.
- Children behave very well in the early years. They enjoy their learning and enjoy participating in team activities. For example, children played well with bats and balls and work well in small groups independently. The leader of early years has created a calm and safe environment for children to learn in. Children are happy, sociable and polite. Routines are well established, and adults use questions well to encourage language and communication skills. Children are developing their independence in learning.
- Safeguarding is effective and welfare requirements for the early years are met.

School details

Unique reference number	142775
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	10088629

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	5 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	300
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Claire Epsom
Headteacher	Mark Carter-Tufnell
Telephone number	01255 820 823
Website	www.st-osyth.essex.sch.uk
Email address	mailto:schooloffice@st-osyth.essex.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- St Osyth Church of England Primary School is an academy that is a member of the Diocese of Chelmsford Vine Trust.
- The trust was set up by the Diocese and is a multi-academy Church of England trust.
- The school has a local governing body.
- The school's most recent section 48 inspection of religious character took place on 6 February 2019.
- Most pupils are White British. Few pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds and none speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils supported through the pupil premium funding is above average.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is broadly in line with the national average.
- Over the past three years, there has been much movement among staff at the school.

In addition, there is one newly qualified teacher in the school, a trainee teacher and a new leader of the provision for pupils with SEND.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first inspection since the school joined the Diocese of Chelmsford Vine Schools Trust in June 2016.
- The inspectors observed teaching and learning across all year groups.
- The inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, governors, senior leaders, school staff and the trust's chief executive.
- The inspectors looked at pupils' written work, information on pupils' attainment and progress, curriculum planning and records of leaders' monitoring of subjects. The inspectors also looked at the minutes of governing body meetings, safeguarding documents, including mandatory checks made on the recruitment of staff, and the school's website.
- Discussions were held with the school council and two groups of pupils from key stages 1 and 2. Informal conversations with pupils took place during lessons and breaktimes.
- The inspectors took account of 73 responses to Ofsted's online parental questionnaire, Parent View, 16 responses to Ofsted's free-text service and 22 responses to the staff survey. Inspectors also spoke with parents at the beginning of the school day.

Inspection team

Cindy Impey, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
James Richards	Ofsted Inspector
Nick Templeton	Ofsted Inspector

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Manchester
M1 2WD

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