

Inspection of Chalfont Valley E-ACT Primary Academy

Bell Lane, Little Chalfont, Amersham, Buckinghamshire HP6 6PF

Inspection dates: 2–3 October 2019

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Requires improvement
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy coming to school. They know that if they have any worries or concerns, they can speak to their teachers. Pupils say that bullying does not happen at school. They are also confident that, if it ever happened, teachers would sort this out. Relationships between staff and pupils are positive.

Most pupils behave well. However, some pupils do not focus well enough on their learning. Although pupils feel safe, the challenging behaviour of a small number of pupils unsettles them.

The school's vision is to 'open minds and broaden horizons'. Leaders want the best for every pupil at Chalfont Valley. They make sure that pupils learn about the world beyond the school's locality. The weekly visits to 'Restore Hope' provide pupils with rich outdoor learning experiences. Pupils thoroughly enjoy these opportunities. These visits support pupils' social skills, build their self-esteem and develop their resilience.

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

Children get off to a good start in the early years. Adults are caring and warm. This helps children to make a happy, settled start to school. Teachers are enthusiastic and foster children's enjoyment of learning, including reading. Well-designed activities interest children and spark their curiosity. Teachers give priority to developing children's language skills, reading and writing. Children achieve well and are well prepared for Year 1.

Leaders have made reading a priority. The school has invested in new reading books to support the curriculum. Extra training has developed staff knowledge and confidence in teaching reading. These developments have been effective. In most classes, those pupils who need to catch up are supported well. In 2019, there was a notable increase pupils' achievement in the Year 1 phonics (letters and the sounds they represent) screening check.

Leaders ensure that pupils experience a broad and interesting curriculum. The school's plans for reading, writing and mathematics are well thought out. In these subjects, teaching builds on what pupils have learned before. This is helping pupils to know and remember more. The mathematics curriculum is suitably challenging. It matches the expectations of the national curriculum.

The organisation and planning of other subjects are not as well developed. Leaders are now focusing on strengthening the sequence of learning in these subjects. Their work to develop science is well under way. However, plans are less advanced in other subjects.

Teachers plan interesting lessons that pupils enjoy. They explain things well to pupils. In most classes, teachers cater for pupils' needs well. This includes support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Leaders acknowledge that there are

some variations in the quality of teaching. They are providing appropriate support and guidance for individual teachers.

In most classes, teachers spot if pupils do not understand something. This means that teachers know which pupils need extra help. This is helping to improve pupils' achievement. Key stage 2 provisional outcomes for 2019 show a marked improvement from 2018. Most pupils achieve well in reading, writing and mathematics.

The focus on pupils' personal development is a strong feature of the school. Sporting activities help to keep pupils active and support their social skills. Leaders provide memorable enrichment experiences for all pupils. These include a residential sailing visit which the trust funds for all pupils in Year 5. This year, the school has increased the range of out-of-school activities on offer.

Leaders' work to improve attendance and behaviour has been effective in some respects. Fixed-term exclusions have reduced significantly. Even so, behaviour is still not good enough. Not all teachers follow the school's behaviour policy when pupils are off-task. Pupils told inspectors that, in some classes, a few pupils regularly disturb their learning. Some parents and carers, pupils and staff express concern about pupils' behaviour. This has contributed to some parents losing confidence in the school. Leaders know they need to sustain and strengthen their work to improve behaviour.

Leaders consider the well-being of staff. They have reduced teacher workload through their new team-planning arrangements. Teachers spoken with during the inspection were positive about this. They told inspectors that they feel well supported by leaders. Leaders and teachers benefit from expertise and support from the trust. Trust directors keep careful oversight of all aspects of the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Safeguarding procedures are strong. Leaders are knowledgeable about risks to pupils. Regular training means that staff know how to identify and report any signs of neglect or abuse. The school organises early help to pupils and their families. When appropriate, leaders refer their concerns to other agencies. Record-keeping is systematic. Leaders carry out appropriate checks on the suitability of adults to work with children.

Pupils feel safe and well cared for by adults in school. Pupils learn how to stay safe, for example when online. Pupils learn about the risks posed by the inappropriate use of social media.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In subjects other than reading, writing and mathematics, the curriculum is not planned well enough. Sequences of learning do not build coherently towards defined end points for all subjects. This means that teachers do not have enough guidance about the curriculum content and how pupils' learning builds over time. However, leaders are already taking steps to strengthen the school's curriculum plans in science. They are in the process of developing the sequence of learning in other subjects. Leaders need to ensure that pupils are learning the right knowledge and skills that build towards the school's curriculum goals.
- Not all pupils settle to work quickly and focus on their learning. In some classes, learning is regularly disrupted because of the poor behaviour of a small number of pupils. This poor behaviour has also led to some pupils sometimes feeling uneasy in class. Leaders need to ensure that all staff follow and apply the school's behaviour policy so that expectations are consistent across the school. Leaders need to make sure that the challenging behaviour of some pupils does not interrupt learning or make some pupils feel unsettled.

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 Ofsted Parent View information 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.

If you're not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	138583
Local authority	Buckinghamshire
Inspection number	10111225
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	150
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Michael Wemms
Headteacher	Amanda Tucker
Website	www.chalfontvalleye-actacademy.org.uk/
Date of previous inspection	16–17 March 2016

Information about this school

- There have been many recent changes to staff and leadership. The headteacher was appointed to the school in September 2018 and the deputy headteacher has been in post since September 2019.
- The number of pupils on roll has increased from 119 to 150 since the last inspection. In the early years, children are taught in a mixed-age Nursery and Reception class. In the rest of the school, pupils are taught in single-age classes.
- The school runs a breakfast club for pupils.

Information about this inspection

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

- Inspectors met with the headteacher, other leaders, class teachers and two directors from the trust. Inspectors also met with the chief executive officer of the trust, who is an ex-officio member of the board of trustees.
- The inspection focused on reading, mathematics, science and history. Inspectors visited lessons, talked with pupils about their learning and looked at pupils' work

in books. They also held two separate meetings with pupils and meetings with teachers.

- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour at different times of the day, including lunchtimes.
- Inspectors reviewed the school's records of checks made when staff are appointed. Safeguarding records, including referrals to the local authority, were reviewed. Other documents were reviewed, including the school's curriculum plans, minutes of meetings and the school improvement plan.
- One inspector spoke with parents on the first day of the inspection. A telephone conversation was also held with a parent. Inspectors considered the 38 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, and parents' free-text written responses. There were no responses to Ofsted's staff or pupil surveys.

Inspection team

Sue Cox, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Lizzie Jeanes

Ofsted Inspector

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