

Inspection of Mistley Norman Church of England Primary School and Nursery

Remercie Road, Mistley, Manningtree, Essex CO11 1LS

Inspection dates: 25 and 26 November 2021

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Early years provision

Good

Previous inspection grade

Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Mistley Norman is a small school with strong values. Pupils enjoy coming to school. They say, 'We like the way teachers teach us – they do it in a fun, informative way.' Parents speak warmly of the school. They are positive about the changes made by school leaders.

Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. They are respectful to each other and the adults they work with. Pupils feel safe at school and say, 'There is literally no bullying whatsoever at this school.'

Staff have high expectations for what pupils can achieve in their learning. This has changed significantly since the last inspection. However, pupils have not achieved as well as they should. Leaders recognise that this is due to all the changes in leadership and staff. The improvements to curriculum design and in pupils' learning behaviour mean that gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding in reading and mathematics are rapidly closing.

Pupils have many opportunities within, and in addition to, the curriculum to experience a wide range of interesting visits and visitors to their school. These help pupils to develop a strong understanding of British values and culture.

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

There has been considerable turbulence in leadership and staff since the previous inspection. A new and effective senior leadership team is now in place. They have made a good start to improving the overall effectiveness of the school.

Leaders have focused on improving the reading and mathematics curriculums. This has borne fruit. Pupils' learning in these subjects is improving. There are weaknesses in the curriculum plans for some other subjects. Leaders have not ensured that these subjects are sufficiently well planned and sequenced. Teaching in these subjects does not build on pupils' learning well enough as they move up the school.

Some subject leaders are new to their roles. They do not yet have the knowledge and expertise needed to effectively design and implement curriculum plans in their subjects.

Children make a strong start to learning to read when they begin nursery. Teachers build on this strong start. By the end of Year 2, most pupils are reading accurately and with understanding. Books are well matched to pupils' phonics knowledge. Some older pupils are still developing their phonics knowledge. This is due to a weaker reading curriculum previously. As a result of the new reading curriculum, these older pupils are rapidly catching up.

Pupils develop a love of reading. They say 'book talk' lessons help them understand what they are reading and develop their confidence in talking about books. Pupils enjoy finding books matched to their interests and reading level in their newly arranged library.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are included well in lessons and access the full curriculum. The new special needs coordinator has reviewed the special needs register. He has ensured that pupils' needs are accurately identified and that pupils with SEND receive the support needed for their learning and behaviour.

There is good provision for all children in Nursery and Reception. Leaders work well together to ensure smooth transition into Nursery and into Reception. The curriculum is carefully planned and sequenced. All adults are well trained. They join in with children's learning activities, develop children's language and move children's learning forward. Children leave Reception well prepared for learning in Year 1.

Leaders have focused on improving pupils' behaviour. Pupils have positive attitudes to learning. Leaders have provided more opportunities to promote pupils' personal development, for example through residential and cultural visits. Leaders have ensured that the curriculum follows the most recent requirements for relationships, sex, and health education.

Governors give effective support to leaders. They know most of the school's strengths and areas for development. However, they recognise that they need to give greater challenge about the quality of education in subjects other than English and mathematics.

Teachers say there are no workload issues. Leaders and the trust provide helpful training to enable them to improve their teaching.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Ensuring pupils are safe is of the highest priority. This continued during the national lockdowns. Staff are well trained in the school's processes and procedures. They know when and how to report a concern. Leaders are tenacious in following up referrals.

Leaders work well with external agencies. The safeguarding governor makes regular visits to check that systems are working well and that they follow current guidance. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe online and in the local community. They say they are confident to talk to an adult if they have any concerns.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some curriculum plans are not well designed and sequenced. This is, in part, because some curriculum leaders are new to post. Curriculum plans in the subjects they lead do not identify the important knowledge that pupils need to learn or organise this knowledge in a way that helps pupils to learn and remember it. Leaders should ensure that curriculum leaders have the time, knowledge and expertise they need, and that all curriculum subjects are carefully designed and implemented effectively.
- Governors give close scrutiny to safeguarding and the school's finances. They can explain why leaders have focused on improving English and mathematics. However, they are not as robust in checking the quality of education in other subjects. Governors need to check that leaders implement a curriculum that supports pupils to learn well across the full range of subjects.

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.

If you are the school and you are 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	141658
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	10200522
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	93
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Mike Ferguson
Headteacher	Mark Carter-Tufnell
Website	www.mistleynormancofe.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	24 and 25 January 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The predecessor school converted to academy status, sponsored by the Diocese of Chelmsford Vine Trust, in February 2015
- The chief executive officer has overall responsibility for governance and works with the school's academy committee, which reports directly to the board of trustees.
- The Vine Trust improvement officer and Diocesan Education Officer provide formal support to the school.
- The headteacher took up his position in September 2020. He is also headteacher of St Osyth Primary Church of England Primary School, sponsored by The Diocese of Chelmsford Vine Trust. The deputy headteacher at St Osyth is also English subject leader and a senior leader at Mistley Norman. A teacher at St Osyth is also Nursery leader at Mistley Norman.
- The deputy headteacher at Mistley Norman took up his position in January 2021.
- Mistley Norman is smaller than the average-sized primary school.

- Children in the Nursery and Reception Years are taught separately. Reception children are taught in the Year 1 class. Other classes comprise Years 2, 3 and 4, and Years 5 and 6.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is much higher than the national average.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is above average. The number of pupils who are supported by an education health and care plan is lower than average.
- The religious character of the school was inspected under section 48 of the Education Act (2005) in January 2017 and was judged to be good.

Information about this inspection

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

This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation.

- During the inspection, inspectors met with the school's senior leaders. Inspectors met with the academy committee for Mistley Norman, the Vine Trust director of education and diocesan education officer.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in the following subjects: reading, history, mathematics, and science.
- For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also looked at curriculum plans and spoke to leaders about some other subjects.
- Inspectors spoke to parents dropping off their children at school and Nursery. There were eight positive responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View. There were no responses to the survey for staff or the pupils' survey. Inspectors spoke to groups of pupils when visiting lessons, at a formal meeting, and on the playground, to gather their views.

Inspection team

Julie Winyard, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Darron Jackson

Ofsted Inspector

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