

Inspection of an outstanding school: Great Chart Primary School

Hoxton Close, Singleton, Ashford, Kent TN23 5LB

Inspection dates:

7 and 8 December 2021

Outcome

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of outstanding as a result of this initial (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might not be as high if a full inspection were carried out now. The next inspection will therefore be a full (section 5) inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Happy pupils make lasting memories at Great Chart Primary School. They enjoy many opportunities and experiences. Year 5 pupils talk with delight about the recent Victorian day, when they dressed up and had to copy out the alphabet on a chalkboard. During the inspection, Year 6 pupils enjoyed taking part in a Second World War tea dance.

Parents are overwhelming positive about the school. They say that staff are 'very supportive and have a great rapport with the children'. Pupils feel safe. All staff who completed the online staff survey considered that the behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils are polite and caring to one another. Rare incidents of bullying are well managed by staff.

Pupils enjoy taking on responsibilities. For example, the eco-warriors take their roles very seriously and carefully monitor the use of electricity in the school. This is a very inclusive school. Leaders ensure that pupils learn to understand about how others may feel. They help pupils to develop an understanding of terms such as 'respect' and 'tolerance'.

Teachers have high expectations of all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). In lessons, pupils work hard and have positive attitudes to their learning.

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

Staff and parents praise the strong and capable leadership at this school. One parent said, 'Leadership is amazing and our child loves every minute they spend at school.' All staff who responded to the staff survey were proud to work at the school and considered that senior leaders are very aware of their workload. Leaders have designed an ambitious curriculum that celebrates the school's vision of being 'a great place to discover and learn'.

Curriculum plans have been written for all year groups in each subject. These plans clearly set out the knowledge and skills that pupils will learn in each subject as they progress through the school. In some subjects, such as history and geography, there is now a focus on building pupils' confidence in their understanding of key concepts and vocabulary across the topics they study.

Teachers are highly experienced and enjoy working at the school. They have good subject knowledge and explain new learning carefully. In lessons, pupils are often engrossed in the various tasks and activities that staff provide. Staff check pupils' knowledge and understanding of subjects regularly. For example, in subjects such as mathematics staff check to make sure that pupils have really understood essential knowledge.

Developing a love of reading is a key priority for the school. In the Reception Year, children begin to learn phonics as soon as they start school. They quickly learn the sounds of all the letters of the alphabet. Leaders are aware of the further work needed to ensure all staff have the training to deliver the phonics programme confidently. As pupils move through the school, they learn to read fluently and with enjoyment.

Staff know pupils very well. The special educational needs and disabilities coordinator works closely with parents and staff to plan the right support for each pupil. These plans are regularly checked and, if needed, the curriculum is changed to ensure that pupils with SEND are successful in their learning. The school has supported children joining the school in the early years very effectively. For example, staff have helped them to settle quickly into school routines.

The provision for personal development is a strength of the school. There are numerous opportunities for pupils to develop their cultural understanding through trips and visits. Music plays a large part in school life. Pupils have regular opportunities to perform, such as at Christmas concerts. They play a range of instruments at the school productions. Pupils also learn about taking on responsibility, for example when representing the views of others on the school council.

At breaktimes and lunchtimes, pupils play well together. The school grounds provide many opportunities for pupils to develop their physical skills. Pupils talk proudly about how they complete the various trim trails. They also use the grounds to gain a wider appreciation of the natural environment and improve their mental well-being. They appreciate activities such as gardening and forest school.

In discussion with the headteacher, the inspector agreed that the implementation of the curriculum in the foundation subjects as well as ongoing training in the teaching of phonics may usefully serve as a focus for the next inspection.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Safeguarding is a priority for all staff. They are well trained and keep meticulous records. All staff know pupils and their families well. They are able to quickly identify any

concerns. There is close communication with a range of external agencies to ensure that pupils are kept safe.

Pupils say that they feel safe at this school. They learn how to stay safe in many situations, such as when online. For example, they know not to disclose any personal information when online. Pupils know that they need to alert an adult if they have any concerns.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, such as history and geography, leaders are still implementing how pupils can make stronger connections across the topics they study. Leaders must continue to monitor the full implementation of the curriculum. This will ensure pupils are more confident to use and apply the key concepts and vocabulary they learn.
- While pupils read fluently for their age, not all staff have the detailed knowledge they need to teach the phonics programme. Leaders need to make sure that every member of staff is an expert in teaching phonics. This will ensure that all pupils read with confidence and can access a wide variety of fiction and non-fiction books.

Background

When we have judged a school to be outstanding, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains outstanding. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good or outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the section 8 inspection as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be outstanding in March 2016.

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	118375
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10211931
Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	420
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Stuart Fitch
Headteacher	Wendy Pang
Website	www.great-chart.kent.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	15 and 16 March 2016, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school offers weekly support for a small number of pupils who attend a local special school.
- The school uses one registered alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and has taken that into account in their evaluation.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, the inspector 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.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher and other members of the senior leadership team. There was a meeting with the chair and two other members from the governing body. There was a telephone conversation with a representative from the local authority.

- To inspect the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector scrutinised the school's single central record and spoke to staff and pupils. The inspector looked at a range of safeguarding records and behaviour logs.
- The inspector reviewed a wide range of school information, including documents on the school's website, leaders' improvement plans and the minutes of the governing body.
- The inspector considered 75 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View, including 69 free-text responses submitted during the inspection. The inspector also considered 44 responses to the staff survey.

Inspection team

Liz Bowes, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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