

Inspection of Minster in Sheppey Primary School

Brecon Chase, Minster, Sheerness, Kent ME12 2HX

Inspection dates: 9 and 10 March 2022

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Early years provision **Good**

Previous inspection grade Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils at this school enjoy their learning in the classroom, at the beach and at forest school. They feel safe and well cared for. Pupils know that school staff will help them with any worries that they might have.

Leaders have high expectations for all pupils. Most pupils achieve very well, particularly in English and mathematics. However, a small number of pupils need more expert teaching in reading to be able to meet or exceed age-related expectations.

Pupils at the school behave very well and appreciate the nurturing approach that all staff take. Pupils make a very positive contribution to the culture of school, taking on a range of roles, such as anti-bullying ambassador or playground buddy. Pupils also take a leading role in caring for the school's chickens, guinea pigs and sheep. For many pupils, this has helped them to build their confidence and develop a sense of purpose and belonging. Pupils told inspectors that adults at the school would always resolve any playground conflict quickly and supportively.

Parents recognise the dedication of the staff and leaders, particularly throughout the pandemic. They feel that their children get the support they need to identify and develop their individual talents and interests. Some parents feel that leaders focus too much on reading targets and that, for some children, this has been at the expense of their developing love of reading.

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

The personal development of pupils is a strength within the school. There is a well-planned curriculum for pupils' personal, social and health education (PSHE) in place. This programme has been adapted to meet the needs of all pupils following the pandemic. Relationship and sex education has been carefully woven through the PSHE curriculum, and pupils are positive about the teaching of PSHE. Pupils develop their confidence and leadership skills through their contributions to pupil parliament and in sports leadership roles. They are encouraged to become active citizens and to support national and local charities. Behaviour within the school is calm, and pupils are highly motivated in their learning. Leaders know that, following the pandemic, too many pupils remain persistently absent.

Leaders have identified that the teaching of early reading in the school needs to be developed. This is because, at present, children in Reception do not get off to a quick enough start with their reading, and not all staff are sufficiently expert in the teaching of reading. This means that some pupils who struggle to learn to read fall behind. Leaders then provide extensive catch-up to support them as they move through the school. This has been exacerbated by the pandemic. Leaders know that, with more effective teaching from the start, this extensive catch-up would not be

required. Leaders have clear plans in place to implement a new phonics programme, and ensure all staff are fully trained by September 2022.

The school's wider reading curriculum is very well developed and rigorous. Leaders are aware that keeping pace with the demands of the programme can cause some pupils to feel anxious. They are working to balance this carefully, so that pupils get sufficient time and space to read for pleasure.

Leaders have introduced a well-sequenced curriculum for mathematics. Teachers have expert subject knowledge in mathematics and deliver the curriculum well. Pupils have positive attitudes towards mathematics and see themselves as mathematicians. As they move through the school, all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) successfully utilise the knowledge and skills they have learned to understand increasingly complex mathematical concepts and procedures.

The curriculum in science and the foundation subjects has been in development over recent years. In some subjects, for example science and art and design, leaders have set out a very well-sequenced curriculum. In others, such as geography, more work is needed to ensure that what pupils learn over time is carefully sequenced to ensure that pupils acquire the knowledge and cultural capital they will need for the next phase of their education.

The implementation of the curriculum in science and foundation subjects has been impacted by the pandemic, and leaders are aware that there is more work to do to ensure that the school's curriculum is well implemented and that, over time, pupils are learning what leaders intend them to in each subject.

Senior leaders, executive leaders, local governors and trustees are highly committed to the school. They are frustrated that the pandemic has slowed some of their work to further develop the curriculum. However, staff and pupils, and the community more widely, have been heavily impacted by COVID-19. Senior leaders have responded intelligently, and prioritised where they have needed to ensure that staff well-being has also been supported.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

All staff within the school understand how to identify pupils who need early help, or who are at risk of abuse, neglect, exploitation, or have been harmed. Leaders know the local community very well and ensure that staff have a good understanding of the specific risks that impact children in their community. Leaders responsible for safeguarding know how to secure the help that pupils need, and they make referrals to safeguarding partners and other external agencies as appropriate. Senior leaders ensure that safe recruitment practices are followed. Staff know how to raise a concern about another member of staff. The school's curriculum has been developed to support pupils to stay safe online and in their day-to-day lives.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Not all staff have the expertise they need to support the lowest attaining 20% effectively with their reading. This means that some pupils fall behind. Leaders do ensure that these pupils are supported through intervention, and most of them do catch up over time. However, leaders know that the right teaching from the start would enable these pupils to keep pace with the reading curriculum and this would enable them to learn more effectively across the curriculum. Leaders need to ensure that the training staff receive builds sufficient expertise to enable them to support all readers to make sufficient progress to meet or exceed age-related expectations, right from the start of Reception.
- Leaders need to continue their work to refine the sequencing of knowledge and skills in some foundation subjects. This will ensure that all pupils acquire the knowledge and cultural capital they will need for the next phase of their education. To support the implementation of these curriculums, leaders should ensure that the strategic professional development programme further develops teachers' subject specific expertise in each subject that they teach. For this reason, the transitional arrangements have been applied.
- Assessment in the foundation subjects is not yet consistently used effectively, for example to help pupils embed and use knowledge fluently across the curriculum. Leaders need to develop assessment in foundation subjects so that it helps pupils to embed knowledge and use it fluently, and assists teachers in producing clear next steps for pupils.
- Within the context of the pandemic, too many pupils at the school remain persistently absent. Senior leaders know there is more work to do to address this. Leaders need to continue their work to address this and ensure that all pupils have high attendance.

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	143606
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10200899
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	554
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Howard Fisher
Co-headteachers	Michelle Jeffery Lynne Lewis
Website	www.minster-sheppey.kent.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	22 November 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is not currently using any external alternative provision.
- The chief executive officer of the multi academy trust is currently the executive headteacher of the school.

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 leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the co-headteachers and other senior leaders. Inspectors spoke with executive leaders from the multi-academy trust, including the chief executive officer. Inspectors also spoke with the chair of trustees and representatives of the local governing body.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, science, religious education, and geography. 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 listened to pupils reading and talked to pupils across the school about their love of reading.
- Inspectors also looked at curriculum plans and spoke to leaders about a range of additional national curriculum subjects.
- Inspectors also looked at curriculum plans and spoke to leaders about the curriculum in early years.
- To inspect safeguarding, inspectors checked the single central record and spoke to leaders, staff and pupils. Throughout the inspection, inspectors considered and checked the culture of safeguarding within the school.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documentation including the school's self-evaluation and school improvement plans.
- Inspectors talked to pupils formally and informally about their learning, what behaviour is like at school and whether they felt safe at school.
- Inspectors reviewed 84 responses to the staff survey, and 142 responses to parent survey, including the free-text comments that parents made. Inspectors also spoke to parents and carers at the start of the first day of the inspection.

Inspection team

Alice Roberts, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Rachel McDonald-Taylor	Ofsted Inspector
Zoe Harris	Her Majesty's Inspector
Hanna Miller	Her Majesty's Inspector

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