

Inspection of Furley Park Primary Academy

Reed Crescent, Park Farm, Kingsnorth, Ashford, Kent TN23 3PA

Inspection dates: 5 to 6 July 2022

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

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 get along well together. School is a happy place for them. They enjoy socialising together at breaktimes and lunchtimes. Those with additional responsibilities, such as being a play leader, take their roles seriously and approach them with enthusiasm.

Pupils are well cared for. Staff know pupils well. Pupils know there are adults they can talk to if they are worried about something and that it will get sorted out. Parents and carers appreciate the support that is available for their children. As one parent put it, 'Although the school is large, with all the associated advantages, it has a small school feel where every child is treated as an individual.'

Pupils understand that leaders and teachers expect them to try their best. Pupils enjoy learning and they mostly work hard in their lessons. However, sometimes expectations of what pupils should achieve are not high enough.

Pupils feel safe. They say that bullying is rare. Leaders have ensured that there are clear policies in place to deal with any problems. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe online.

Pupils benefit from a wide range of extra-curricular activities, from sport-related opportunities to the Shakespeare Club and its productions. There is something for everyone.

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

Leaders are ambitious for the pupils. They have established clear priorities and are taking appropriate action to improve the school further. That said, some work remains to be done to ensure that this ambition is consistently evident in all subjects and in all classrooms. Staff feel well supported by leaders. They say that they are listened to and that the training they get is helpful.

Leaders have placed a high priority on ensuring that pupils get off to a good start in learning to read. Children in the early years begin to learn sounds and letters as soon as they join the school. The teaching of phonics is delivered systematically by well-trained staff. It is well resourced and effective. Pupils are regularly assessed and grouped appropriately in phonics. This helps ensure that learning is well matched to their needs. Pupils who fall behind and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are given any additional help they need to learn to read well.

Leaders have put in place a new reading curriculum to support pupils to continue to develop their skills as they move through key stage 2. This is beginning to improve things, although it is not yet consistently applied. Sometimes, work in reading and

other aspects of English, such as writing, is not well matched to curriculum plans or to what pupils can already do.

In mathematics the curriculum sets out what pupils should learn and when. This is implemented well in classrooms. Teaching builds carefully on what pupils can do. It is suitably ambitious and challenging. Pupils learn well in mathematics, including in the early years.

In other subjects, the curriculum is developing. In some subjects, the curriculum is mapped out clearly in steps that build knowledge. In other subjects, there are end points, but it is not so clear how pupils in key stages 1 and 2 build knowledge towards these. Sometimes, teaching focuses more on the activity rather than what pupils need to learn. This means that pupils sometimes struggle to acquire and remember the knowledge they need for future learning.

Pupils with SEND are well supported. Their needs are carefully identified and considered. Leaders ensure that pupils with SEND have their opinions considered in planning their support. They ensure that pupils with SEND are fully represented in all aspects of school life.

The school has an orderly environment. In classes, most pupils behave well. They typically listen to their teachers and follow directions. They enjoy working in pairs or groups. Occasionally, when work is less well matched to pupils' needs, their attention drifts or they do not settle down to work quickly enough.

Pupils are taught about a range of beliefs, both in specific lessons and in school assemblies and celebrations. Pupils from different faiths are encouraged to share understanding of their cultures. Pupils are clear about right and wrong and have a strong understanding of rules, expectations and consequences.

The trust structure is going through a process of revision. New roles have been created to expand the focus on teaching and learning. Trustees have started to make changes to make sure that they get exactly the information they need to hold school leaders to account. They know that this will help them to drive the school forward more effectively.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have ensured that staff have had the training they need to identify safeguarding concerns. Clear systems are in place to record these and establish what pupils need to stay safe. Leaders act promptly when required. They ensure that pupils get the help they need.

Leaders monitor safeguarding needs across the school closely. They know, for example, that since lockdown pupils are using telephone apps more widely to

communicate, sometimes inappropriately. They have worked with parents and adjusted the curriculum to help respond and to teach pupils what is appropriate.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Sometimes, expectations are not high enough for reading and English in key stage 2. This means that teaching is not always well matched to the curriculum outlines or what pupils already know and can do. Leaders should continue to focus on raising expectations in these core curriculum areas so that pupils consistently reach the curriculum end points.
- In subjects other than English and mathematics, the curriculum has not been sufficiently well defined and sequenced to build pupils' subject knowledge in key stages 1 and 2. Sometimes, there is too much focus on the activity pupils will do rather than the knowledge they are supposed to learn. As a result, pupils do not retain knowledge across all subjects. Leaders should support staff in developing clear sequences of learning that build and embed knowledge.
- Trustees have not clearly defined the information they need from school leaders. Sometimes, this leads to a lack of coherence around important school improvement priorities. Systems should be in place so that these improvement priorities are clearly defined and consistently implemented to help drive the school forward with sufficient focus.

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	140322
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10200048
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	585
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Gail Spragg
Headteacher	Emma Collip
Website	www.furleypark.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	20 September 2016, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is one of two schools in the ACE (Aspire, Create, Excel) Learning Multi-Academy Trust.
- A new headteacher has been appointed since the previous inspection.
- The school has expanded and now has three classes in each year group.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- During the inspection, the lead inspector met regularly with school leaders. The lead inspector met with representatives from the trust and local advisory board.
- The inspectors conducted deep dives into reading, English, mathematics, computing, design technology and history. For each deep dive, the inspectors discussed curriculum planning with the subject leader, visited a sample of lessons,

spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The lead inspector listened to some pupils reading.

- Records associated with safeguarding were reviewed, including the single central record and appointment procedures. The inspectors spoke to staff about their safeguarding training and spoke to pupils about the support they have in understanding how to keep safe.
- The inspectors reviewed responses to Ofsted's parent, pupil and staff questionnaires. Two letters from parents were received and considered. Inspectors spoke with some parents at the school gate.
- The inspectors met with groups of staff to discuss their views about the school, including workload and well-being. The inspectors met with several groups of pupils, as well as speaking to pupils during lessons and around the school.

Inspection team

Deborah Gordon, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Debbie Bennett	Ofsted Inspector
Claire Martin-O'Donoghue	Ofsted Inspector
Paul Bateman	Ofsted Inspector

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