

Inspection of a good school: William Martin Church of England Infant and Nursery School

Tawneys Road, Harlow, Essex, CM18 6PN

Inspection dates:

13 to 14 September 2022

Outcome

William Martin Church of England Infant and Nursery School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy what the school has to offer. At the school gates, they have smiles on their faces as they go into school. Pupils look forward to learning new knowledge and being with their friends. Pupils are safe and feel safe. School rules are simple and clear, and teachers model kindness and respect.

Leaders and staff want pupils to excel in reading, to concentrate in class and take pride in their schoolwork. Pupils love reading and being read to. They listen to and follow teachers' instructions with enthusiasm. Pupils work enthusiastically and with care. For example, in mathematics, they lay out their work neatly.

In lessons and at playtimes, pupils behave well. Bullying is rare. If it does happen, teachers are good at resolving it. Pupils know that the adults are there to help them if something is worrying them. The well-stocked new library and the newly refurbished outside areas provide exciting places for pupils to go to.

The school's core values, such as 'responsibility' and 'perseverance', are central to pupils' experiences. Pupils have many opportunities to take on responsibilities and there are many ways that pupils have their efforts celebrated. For example, receiving stickers for showing kindness to others.

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

Leaders have constructed a broad and ambitious curriculum, setting out the knowledge and skills that pupils will learn. Leaders have also invested in suitable resources to underpin this. The revised curriculum has been in place for a year and is having a positive impact. For example, in art, pupils remember a lot about artists and have developed a keen eye for detail, colour and shading. Leaders continuously reflect on which aspects of

the curriculum need to improve. In some subjects, the curriculum does not set out the vocabulary and knowledge to be learned in sufficient detail. Leaders are aware of this and there are plans in place to add additional detail to the curriculum.

Teachers are knowledgeable about teaching. Their instructions for pupils are clear. They help children to learn how to use equipment. Teachers model sentences for pupils to learn. Staff consistently and quickly spot pupils who may be struggling. These pupils are given daily opportunities for additional teaching, so that they can keep up with their peers.

Leaders have recently implemented a new reading scheme. This sets out, step-by-step, the phonics knowledge that pupils will learn. Staff have been trained to deliver the programme and to provide catch-up support. All staff are enthusiastic about teaching pupils to read. Pupils' practise books match the sounds they learn in reading lessons. Leaders have also set out a useful range of literature that teachers read to pupils. Consequently, pupils encounter a range of new vocabulary and knowledge through being read to. Pupils enjoy reading and being read to.

In the early years, staff are knowledgeable about children's development. Staff carefully set out the activities that children will access. These activities help children to develop key skills, such as fine-motor control. Staff focus on helping children to develop their communication skills. Staff provide plenty of opportunities for children to listen to stories and to sing songs. Children are making excellent progress in language development. This helps children to make friends and communicate their needs.

Pupils are polite and friendly. Teachers have high expectations. They remind pupils of the school rules in a friendly way. Pupils know what to do to be successful and how to make good choices. Staff model and use the same key words and phrases to help pupils to concentrate and make good choices about what to do in class.

Staff make apt adjustments and provide additional support to enable pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to learn with their peers, such as by using pre-teaching. Staff work closely with parents and external agencies to ensure that the needs of pupils with SEND are met.

Daily worship often stimulates useful discussions between pupils and teachers. Pupils learn about different cultures and peoples. This helps pupils to be respectful of others. Leaders provide opportunities for pupils to find new talents and interests, such as through participating in inter-school sports events.

Trust leaders and governors have worked closely with school leaders to significantly improve the quality of education in the school. This includes investment in resources and staff training so that, for example, staff can help pupils to make the best start in reading. The enthusiasm of staff for reading and the high-quality curriculum is testament to leaders' joined-up approach to improving the school. Governors have championed leaders' approach to supporting staff well-being. This includes helping leaders to prioritise the most important changes to make.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Since the executive headteacher joined the school, the safeguarding systems have undergone a significant overhaul. Leaders have instilled a robust culture of safeguarding, supported by a new electronic system for detailed recording and analysing of cases.

Staff have received training in how to safeguard pupils. Staff spot the signs that indicate a pupil may be at risk from harm. Staff know pupils and their families well. Leaders work closely with external agencies to get pupils the help that they need. Pupils have been taught how to keep themselves safe, including online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Although leaders have ensured their curriculum is broad and balanced, some aspects of the curriculum do not outline key vocabulary and associated knowledge to be learned. This means that pupils do not always use a wide range of vocabulary. Leaders need to make sure all aspects of the curriculum make clear the vocabulary and knowledge to be learned.

Background

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

This is the first ungraded inspection since we judged the predecessor school, William Martin Church of England VC Nursery and Infant school, to be good in October 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.

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	145602
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	10238304
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	189
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Mike Ferguson
Headteacher	Gina Bailey
Website	www.williammartinschools.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school uses one unregistered alternative provision.
- The executive headteacher took up post in 2019
- The executive headteacher is also the executive headteacher of William Martin Church of England Junior School.
- The school is part of the Diocese of Chelmsford. The most recent section 48 inspection of this Church of England school, which is an inspection of the school's religious character, took place in June 2019.
- The school has before- and after-school provision run by a separately registered and inspected childcare provider. This is accessed by children from the nursery, infant and adjoining junior school.

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 leaders and has taken that into account in the evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with the executive headteacher, the head of school, the chair of the local school board, and the chief executive officer and trustees of the diocese of

Chelmsford Vine Schools Trust. The inspector spoke with the manager of the unregistered alternative provision that the school uses.

- The inspector carried out deep dives in the following subjects: early reading, mathematics and art. For each deep dive, the inspector discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The inspector also heard pupils in different year groups read books to a familiar adult.
- The inspector spoke with leaders about the curriculum in some other subjects.
- The inspector reviewed the responses received to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View, and considered the results of Ofsted's surveys for staff and pupils. The inspector also spoke with parents at the start of the school day.
- The inspector observed pupils' arrival at school and during breaktime.
- To judge the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector reviewed the single central record of recruitment and vetting checks, checked the school's procedures for the safe recruitment of staff and met with the safeguarding team. The inspector also spoke with governors, staff and pupils.

Inspection team

Hannah Stoten, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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