

Inspection of a good school: Holy Trinity C of E Primary School, Eight Ash Green and Aldham

Fiddlers Folley, Fordham Heath, Colchester, Essex CO3 9UE

Inspection date:

22 September 2022

Outcome

Holy Trinity C of E Primary School, Eight Ash Green and Aldham continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy their time at Holy Trinity Church of England Primary School. Pupils are happy and get on well with each other. Older pupils, for instance, look after younger children on the playground. Older pupils enjoy this responsibility and their 'jobs', such as being play leaders or part of the 'student council'.

Pupils behave well. They feel safe and are well looked after. Everyone has high expectations of how pupils should behave. Poor behaviour is not a problem and lessons are rarely disrupted. If there is a disagreement or an incident of bullying, staff quickly sort it out. Pupils enjoy the range of different rewards for when they show great effort or good behaviour. The school is a harmonious community with a culture of mutual respect and tolerance.

The school's 'Book Bingo' is well liked by pupils. It enables pupils to read a range of different books that they might not normally consider. Pupils value this opportunity and talk excitedly about the books they have read. Author visits strengthen pupils' enjoyment of reading.

A growing number of trips and experiences compliment the curriculum. Pupils enjoy the whole-school trip to the beach and the opportunity to attend a residential trip.

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

The school curriculum is ambitious for all pupils and covers the range of subjects within the national curriculum. The curriculum is adapted well to suit the mixed-aged classes. Children in early years get the right care and support to ready them for Year 1 and beyond.

Leaders consider carefully what they want pupils to know across each curriculum subject. Knowledge is taught in a logical order so that pupils build a secure understanding as they move up through the school's classes. The school's 'big question' and project-based approach enables pupils to make knowledge links from what they have learned before. For example, pupils can discuss the concept of 'power' and Nazi Germany through what they have learned previously about the Roman Empire.

Teachers' good subject knowledge supports them well to choose effective activities in class that support pupils' learning. Teachers' checks in class quickly help them identify if a pupil does not understand an idea. In addition, leaders ensure that teachers have accurate and useful information about the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). This means that teachers make helpful changes to lessons to support pupils with SEND well. As a result, many pupils, including those with SEND, make good progress through the curriculum.

The school's approach to assessment, for many subjects, is working well. In a small number of foundation subjects, however, assessment has changed. Despite leaders' intentions, this new assessment is not as helpful as it should be in identifying specifically what knowledge pupils have remembered.

Leaders prioritise reading. Learning to read starts early when children join the school. Well-trained adults support children in early years to learn their letters and sounds effectively. Pupils quickly become confident, fluent readers. If pupils fall behind with their reading knowledge, they get effective help to support them to catch up. Pupils enjoy reading and being read to by adults. Books are a key feature of the school's curriculum.

The school's values permeate much of school life and the positive way that the school community works together. The personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education curriculum is an important part of the school's work. The PSHE curriculum supports pupils well in learning about a range of topics, such as how others may be different from themselves or how to manage their friendships. Pupils and children in early years are confident, polite individuals who respect each other and staff. Learning is rarely disrupted and so pupils are positive about their school experience.

Leaders ensure staff have the right training to support all pupils well. Growing partnerships with other schools, for instance, help subject leaders improve their curriculum areas. Leaders use external help, such as the local authority, to help them evaluate what is working well in their curriculum and what needs to be changed. Leaders ensure that changes they make take into account staff workload and well-being.

Governors have a secure understanding of their statutory duties, which they implement well. While governors support leaders in their drive for continual school improvement, the governor curriculum monitoring training is very recent. Governors have not put this training into practice and so their monitoring of the curriculum is not rigorous enough to support and challenge leaders.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Effective safeguarding training supports all staff to spot if a child is at risk of harm or neglect. The processes to report safeguarding concerns are clear, and they are known and used by all. Detailed safeguarding records show prompt responses to, and actions in relation to, safeguarding concerns about pupils. Leaders use a range of early help and external agencies to ensure pupils and their families get the right help.

Staff teach pupils well about risks in and out of school. Pupils, for example, know how to keep safe while online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a small number of subjects, assessment is not well developed. It does not always link to the key knowledge pupils have learned and remembered over a period of time. This means that it is not helpful to teachers, or parents, in identifying what pupils know or can do. Leaders need to ensure all assessment is appropriately linked to key knowledge and helpful in identifying what pupils know and can do.
- Governors' monitoring of the curriculum is not as effective as other areas of governors' work. This means that governors' visits do not always effectively challenge and support leaders about the curriculum. Governors need to ensure that all governors have the necessary training and guidance to enable them to support and challenge leaders about the impact of their curriculum.

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 second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in March 2013.

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	115075
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	10212463
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	5 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	87
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Paul Presland
Headteacher	Ceri Daniels
Website	www.holytrinityeightashgreen.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	8 March 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school runs a breakfast club.
- The school does not use alternative provision.
- As the school is designated as having a religious character, it is inspected under section 48 of the Education Act 2005. The last section 48 inspection of the school was in June 2015. The timescales for reinspection have been extended because of the COVID-19 pandemic. The next inspection is due by December 2022.

Information about this inspection

- 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 carried out deep dives in the following subjects: reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, the inspector met with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers and pupils about learning and looked at a sample of pupils' work.

- Inspectors looked at a range of pupils' work across other subjects, including geography, science and art.
- The lead inspector held meetings with representatives from the governing body both in person and via the telephone.
- The lead inspector met with a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors met with the school's special educational needs coordinator.
- Inspectors spoke with parents at the school gate.
- To inspect safeguarding, the lead inspector met with the school's safeguarding leader. Inspectors looked closely at safeguarding systems, processes and records. They spoke to pupils, staff and governors about safeguarding.
- Inspectors considered the 31 responses made by parents to Ofsted Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire. Inspectors also considered the 14 responses to Ofsted's online staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Damian Loneragan, lead inspector
Jason Carey

His Majesty's Inspector
Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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