

Inspection of Weeley St Andrew's CofE Primary School

Old Clacton Road, Weeley, Clacton-On-Sea, Essex CO16 9LW

Inspection dates: 11 and 12 October 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	Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy to attend Weeley St Andrew's Church of England Primary School. The school values – love, trust and wisdom – underpin pupils' education and wider school experiences.

Pupils love to receive a cheerful welcome from staff, their peers and the two school dogs. It sets pupils up well for learning and play. Pupils eagerly help one another complete work successfully. They play kindly at lunchtime and sensibly share equipment. This polite behaviour continues for those attending the after-school 'tea time' club.

Pupils trust staff. They know that they can discuss any worries with them. Pupils are confident that staff would deal with any rare incidents of bullying or name-calling straight away. This helps pupils to feel safe in school.

Wisdom grows through pupils' learning of the curriculum and wider experiences. They meet the high expectations staff now have for them. For example, pupils happily use the feedback teachers provide to improve their written work. Pupils, too, benefit greatly from the extra-curricular sports clubs, helping them to keep healthy through sports like dance, football and netball. Pupils use their insight about school life to share ideas with the school council. This helps pupils play a part in further improving the school.

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

Leaders continue to review and refresh the school's curriculum. They identified a need for there to be a strong focus on developing pupils' spoken and written language. Most subjects now include curriculum plans that set out what words and ideas pupils learn. Leaders trained teachers to understand the content in these plans. This helps teachers to explain it correctly and clearly to pupils. Teachers introduce specific vocabulary and concepts in small steps. By teaching in this way, pupils get to revisit learning within and across lessons. This helps them remember what they learned.

For most subjects, assessment involves a two-step approach. Firstly, teachers make observations of what pupils know and can do to inform their teaching. For example, in the early years, staff incorporate the sounds children learn in phonics into children's play. This allows weaker readers the chance to secure their knowledge. Secondly, teachers use an online system to capture which curriculum aims pupils achieve. Teachers use this to identify gaps in pupils' knowledge to address in upcoming lessons.

In a few subjects, there is a lack of precision in what pupils learn. Where the aims are broad, and where some teachers lack the necessary subject knowledge, pupils learn information that is inaccurate or not well placed to prepare them for what comes next.

The reading programme mostly works well. In key stage 2, online reading tests help match pupils to a suitable book. These pupils enjoy reading, finding it soothing. They reel off the books they have read, as well as those their teachers read aloud to them. When pupils struggle to read, teachers generally use assessment well to inform catch-up support. This ensures pupils learn the sounds they need to know to read more fluently. However, where leaders have not checked the provision meticulously, this strong practice is not present in every class. Though these pupils catch up, it takes them longer than it should.

Leaders have strengthened provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Kind, patient staff help pupils to focus and attempt activities. Appropriate adjustments, such as breaking down learning into manageable steps, mean pupils can complete the activities their teachers arrange.

Pupils generally behave well. Being independent starts in the early years, where children learn how to access and use resources sensibly. Across the school, staff facilitate acts of kindness between pupils. For example, Year 6 pupils act as buddies looking after younger pupils on the playground. If a pupil misbehaves, completing a 'thinking sheet' helps them reflect on where they went wrong and how to make better choices next time.

A carefully considered personal, social and health education curriculum is in place. There are supplementary experiences that build on what pupils learn in these lessons. These include pupils learning how to manage personal finances, how to ride a bike safely on the road and how to prepare healthy meals. In this way, pupils are prepared well for the future.

Leaders, including governors, typically take swift action to rectify issues. For example, to help develop curriculum leaders' confidence and expertise, they arrange school-to-school support, sharing best practice. Parents recognise how leaders and staff improved the school in recent years. They feel assured that their children's school is one that will keep getting better.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure all staff receive suitable checks and safeguarding training. This provides staff with the knowledge and skills necessary to spot and report the signs of potential abuse or neglect in pupils. Leaders keep up-to-date records of their work to safeguard pupils. These demonstrate how well leaders know pupils' families. Using this information, leaders work closely with partner agencies to provide prompt support to vulnerable families.

Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe on- and offline. For example, they know how to recognise and report unkind online behaviour to keep themselves and others safe.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- A few areas of the curriculum are at an earlier stage of development. Leaders have not precisely identified the knowledge and skills that pupils should learn. As a result, what pupils learn does not set them up for the next stage of their education as well as it could. Leaders should set out the specific concepts, skills and vocabulary pupils will learn in a logical order.
- Some leaders and teachers lack the subject knowledge and understanding of how to use a curriculum plan to create lesson sequences in a few subjects. This means that, sometimes, pupils do not understand what is being taught. Leaders should support these leaders and teachers to revisit their subject knowledge, as well as provide training in how to transform curriculum plans into clearly sequenced lessons that provide valuable learning experiences for pupils.
- The quality of reading catch-up support, including how assessment is used to focus this tightly on the sounds pupils need to know to improve their fluency, is varied. As a result, a small number of pupils are not reading as fluently as they should. Leaders should provide training for all staff on how to assist pupils at an early stage of reading, including how to use assessment to inform and monitor this support.

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	140181
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	10241122
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	183
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Mike Ferguson
Headteacher	Diane Fawcett
Website	www.st-andrewsprisch-weeley.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	6 and 7 March 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of The Diocese of Chelmsford Vine Schools Trust, a multi-academy trust.
- The school has a religious character, Church of England, and was last inspected under section 48 of the Education Act 2005 on 8 November 2017. The next inspection is due by November 2025.
- Leaders do not currently use alternative provision for the education of pupils off site.
- There is before- and after-school childcare for pupils attending the school.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded 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.

- During this inspection, inspectors met with the headteacher, the assistant headteacher, the special educational needs coordinator, the chief executive officer of the trust, two local governors and two directors working for the multi-academy trust.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives into these subjects: early reading, mathematics, history and computing. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. An inspector also observed some pupils reading to a member of staff.
- Inspectors also spoke to leaders about the curriculum in some other subjects, namely science and art.
- To inspect safeguarding, inspectors scrutinised a wide range of documentation, including the pre-employment checks on staff. Inspectors also spoke to trustees, local governors, staff and pupils.
- To gather pupils' views, inspectors observed pupils' behaviour and held discussions with some of them. Inspectors also took account of the 28 responses to Ofsted's pupil questionnaire.
- To gather staff's views, particularly on workload and well-being, inspectors spoke to several of them. Inspectors also took account of the 16 responses to Ofsted's staff questionnaire.
- To gather parents' and carers' views, inspectors spoke to several of them as they collected their children from school. Inspectors also took account of the 40 responses, including 21 free-text responses, to the online questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View.

Inspection team

Ahson Mohammed, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Stephen Cloke	Ofsted Inspector

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