

Inspection of Vange Primary School and Nursery

London Road, Vange, Basildon, Essex SS16 4QA

Inspection dates: 16 and 17 November 2022

Overall effectiveness	Good
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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 are enthusiastic about their learning. They appreciate how their teachers help them, such as the modelling of new words and sharing new ways to solve problems in mathematics. As a result, pupils proudly showcase their work. They remember what they learn. For example, pupils in Years 2 and 3 can accurately name bones in a human skeleton.

Strong friendships form because pupils behave kindly and politely. They follow teachers' instructions and get along well as they work. The colour-based feeling chart teaches pupils to reflect on their behaviour. Having a place to go to such as the 'rainbow room' when they are sad, helps pupils with their emotions. Bullying is very rare. Pupils are confident that when they fall out, seeking support from staff will solve the issue. Having staff who listen to their concerns ensures pupils are safe in school.

Opportunities to take on leadership roles help pupils become independent. Playleaders help other pupils to find friends, encouraging pupils to play games together. Pupils enjoy giving out certificates during assemblies.

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

Leaders have put in place an ambitious, well-ordered curriculum throughout the school, including in early years. They make sure that the curriculum content is well understood by pupils during lessons. In some subjects, such as mathematics and physical education, leaders have thought carefully about what they want pupils to know. However, the curriculum is less developed in subjects where the leaders have made very recent changes. In these subject areas, pupils do not have enough opportunities to build up a deep understanding of the knowledge they are learning.

Teacher checks and revisiting of key knowledge is used to help pupils remember what they learn during lessons. In some subjects, teachers use quick revision questions to help pupils to remember lesson content. However, teacher assessment in some subjects does not help teachers to identify what pupils know and whether pupils are ready to move on in their learning. Where this is the case, pupils find it harder to talk about, and apply what they have learned sufficiently well.

Learning to read starts early in Reception. Adults are well trained to use leaders' chosen scheme to teach children phonics effectively. Pupils have well established strategies to read age-appropriate books. Some pupils' choices of books are less well matched to what they know and their individual interests.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) have high-quality support. Teaching assistants are well trained to support pupils with specific needs. Leaders prepare detailed plans to help pupils with their learning. They ensure that pupils learn the same curriculum as their peers. This is ensuring that most pupils with SEND achieve well.

Children settle quickly into early years. Children play and learn happily in a purposeful and calm environment. Adults support all children well. They ask appropriate questions to encourage children's language development and vocabulary. Teachers use a range of activities to check children's understanding of what they are learning. The curriculum design and content ensures children are being well prepared for Year 1.

Leaders have considered the wider personal development of pupils effectively. Learning to swim ensures all pupils understand water safety. Visiting places of worship, such as a local church, helps pupils understand and respect how some people practise a faith. All this is done knowingly to provide pupils with life skills and experiences which prepare them for life in modern Britain

The school has clear behaviour routines. Pupils understand teachers' expectations and they enjoy a calm and orderly atmosphere in the school with little, if any, disruption to their learning.

Governors know the school well. They are aware of what needs to improve. Governors successfully challenge leaders and hold them to account. The recent federation arrangements with another school have strengthened support for all staff. Staff report positively on their relationships with leaders. These relationships ensure there is strong teamwork and commitment throughout the school.

Parents generally recognise leaders' positive work in improving the school for their children.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff are trained well to identify pupils who might be at risk. The annual refresher training helps staff do this confidently. Staff use the school system for reporting concerns and leaders take appropriate action. Leaders involve external agencies, for example a family liaison officer, to help vulnerable pupils and their families.

Along with having staff to confide in, pupils are safe because they learn how to identify and report risks. The curriculum supports them to keep themselves safe. For example, they spoke about how to avoid dangers online and how to always speak to an adult when they have worries.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have put in place an ambitious curriculum. There are some minor variations in a small number of subjects, where plans do not identify enough opportunities for pupils to learn what they need to. This leads to some pupils

having gaps in what they know. Leaders should ensure that all curriculum plans are specifically detailed to support pupils to have the wide range of knowledge they need.

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	114811
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	10242079
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	103
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Dave Smith
Headteacher	Gareth Allen
Website	www.vange.essex.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	10 July 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of a federation with Millhouse Primary School and Nursery. The headteacher oversees the work of both schools as the executive headteacher.
- School leaders do not currently use alternative provision for any pupil.
- There is a breakfast club for pupils attending the school. It is run by school staff and managed by school leaders.

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 had received since the COVID 19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in the following subjects: reading, mathematics, science and physical education. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited sample lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. An inspector also listened to a sample of pupils read to a familiar adult.
- Inspectors considered the curriculum in other subject areas, including music and religious education.
- Inspectors held meetings with leaders, including the executive headteacher, the head of school, the special educational needs coordinator, two governors, and a local authority representative who works with the school.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the lead inspector spoke to the designated safeguarding lead and reviewed records, including the single central record of recruitment and vetting checks. Inspectors also reviewed policies and held discussions with governors, school leaders, staff and pupils.
- To gather the views of pupils, inspectors observed their behaviour in lessons and at breaktime and lunchtime. Inspectors also held discussions with several pupils. There were no responses to Ofsted's pupil questionnaire.
- To gather the views of staff, inspectors held discussions with several of them. There were no responses to Ofsted's staff questionnaire.
- To gather the views of parents, inspectors spoke to several parents at the start and end of the school day. Inspectors also took account of the nine free-text responses.

Inspection team

Bozena Laraway, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Caroline Pardy	Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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Textphone: 0161 618 8524
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