

Inspection of a good school: Ortu Corringham Primary School and Nursery

Herd Lane, Corringham, Stanford-le-Hope, Essex SS17 9BH

Inspection dates:

13 to 14 December 2022

Outcome

Ortu Corringham Primary School and Nursery continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

From the time they start Nursery to the time they leave, pupils enjoy learning at school. When children enter the Nursery classroom, they engage in activities straight away. This is also true for older pupils. They like their lessons because they are 'challenging' and 'fun'. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) who are part of the specially resourced provision for pupils with speech and language needs are thriving. They get the right support at the right time. Pupils with SEND take part in all lessons.

Typically, pupils behave well. They respond well to staff's high expectations. During the inspection, pupils gave words of encouragement to each other as they queued patiently to go onstage for their Christmas performance. Pupils report that such behaviour is frequent. They say pupils are mostly kind and supportive. When bullying happens, pupils trust staff to 'nip it in the bud'. Pupils feel safe at school. While there have been a few incidents of extreme behaviour at school, staff respond rapidly. Contrary to some parents' views, these incidents are few and far between.

Pupils access a range of opportunities to broaden their horizons. They perform to public audiences, fundraise and donate food to the local food bank. Pupils learn to play several musical instruments, including the violin.

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

There have been several headteachers since the previous inspection. There has also been a turnover of teaching staff. This has unsettled the parent community. Some express concerns that their child's experience of school is disorientating. Some parents consider there could be better communication from school leaders. Leaders have worked hard to stabilise staffing. They have ensured that pupils follow an ambitious curriculum that is adequately resourced. Leaders make sure that new staff receive the training they need to deliver the curriculum through engaging and high-quality lessons.

Staff have good subject knowledge. This includes learning support assistants who provide one-to-one guidance. They emphasise the important knowledge that pupils need to know and remember. Their clear explanations help pupils to understand complex information, such as simplifying fractions in mathematics. Teachers check carefully what pupils know and can do. They provide pupils with frequent practice if their knowledge and understanding are not secure. Pupils speak confidently about their learning, for example explaining the use of crotchets and quavers in music.

Reading is at the heart of the curriculum. Children in Nursery learn to identify different sounds such as those they hear in nature. These early skills develop in Reception where pupils learn their phonics quickly. Pupils experience success when they learn to read as staff match books to the sounds they know. Support staff show pupils how to keep going, encouraging them to use the decoding strategies they have learned. Pupils who need help reading receive extra support to catch up. Older pupils read widely and often. They speak knowledgeably about the structure of stories and how to be an engaging writer.

Pupils with SEND receive effective support. They engage well in lessons, learning alongside their peers. Teachers adapt the curriculum so that pupils experience success. There is a strong focus on speech, language and communication needs in early years. Staff keep a watchful eye as children learn to communicate and socialise. The early identification of needs in this area means that children readily get the support they need. This helps children with SEND to succeed and make the best possible start to their education.

Pupils behave well in their lessons and when moving around school. Leaders have chosen a therapeutic approach to help pupils maintain and improve their behaviour. Staff received recent training on this. Staff are becoming more confident with managing the few pupils who have complex behavioural needs. A few staff who responded to the Ofsted staff survey commented that they would like further support with its implementation.

Leaders develop pupils' independence well. Pupils feel involved in the life of the school. The Year 6 leadership team are proud of the roles they have to help improve the school. The school council and eco council also contribute extensively. Pupils undertake a personal development pathway which ensures they receive a wide variety of experiences. These include going to the opera, camping overnight and learning helpful life skills such as sewing. Parents enjoy undertaking activities in early years alongside their children. Children in Nursery recently enjoyed making gingerbread and candle holders for Christmas. Pupils learn about other faiths and cultures. They understand difference and the importance of treating people equally.

Staff appreciate the opportunity they have to discuss their well-being with leaders. Trust leaders and governors also keep a close eye on staff workload. They know the school well, seeing first-hand the impact of the changes that leaders are making. Governors support and challenge school leaders effectively.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff know their safeguarding roles and responsibilities well. They know what to look for should there be a potential issue or concern about a pupil's welfare. Pupils know what bullying is and know how to report it. They trust adults to deal with concerns as they arise. Incidents of extreme behaviour are rare. There are appropriate risk assessments in place to ensure the safety of pupils.

Leaders have a detailed understanding of the needs of their pupils, including the most vulnerable. They work closely with a range of external agencies to help vulnerable pupils get the support they need. Leaders complete appropriate checks on those adults working or volunteering in school.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some parents are not supportive of the work of the school. They feel frustrated by the frequent changes in staffing. Some have perceptions that pupils do not behave as well as they should and that leaders do not communicate effectively. Leaders should review their methods of communication so that parents are better informed, supportive and engaged with the school.
- The school's chosen therapeutic approach to managing complex behaviour is new. As yet, not all staff are confident in its delivery. Leaders should ensure that all staff are well supported to cater for pupils with complex behavioural needs so these pupils learn well in their lessons.

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 school to be good in November 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	140013
Local authority	Thurrock
Inspection number	10211031
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	483
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Georgina Clark
Principal	Karina Garrick
Website	www.ortucorringhamprimary.org
Date of previous inspection	23 to 24 November 2016, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Since the last inspection, there have been three principals. The current principal was previously the vice principal. She assumed the role of substantive principal in June 2022.
- The Ortu Federation multi-academy trust has a local governing body which undertakes some delegated responsibilities, such as monitoring provision for safeguarding.
- The school has nursery provision for two- and three-year-olds.
- The school provides a specially resourced provision for pupils with speech and language needs for 18 pupils on behalf of the local authority. The pupils are fully integrated into the main school.
- The school does not use alternative provision.
- The school runs a daily breakfast club and after-school club.

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 chair of Ortu Federation multi-academy trust and the chair of the local governing body.
- The inspector met with the consulting chief executive officer of the trust, the principal, the vice principal, subject leaders and staff.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in the following subjects: early reading, mathematics and music. The inspector discussed the curriculum with leaders, visited lessons, considered pupils' work and talked to pupils and teachers. The inspector also listened to pupils from different age groups read to a familiar adult.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour in lessons, around school and at social times. She considered pupils' views about behaviour in school. She also spoke with staff about their workload and well-being and pupils' behaviour.
- The inspector looked at safeguarding documentation, including the single central record. She talked to staff about the training they have received and considered how effective leaders' responses were to concerns raised about pupils' welfare and safety.
- The inspector considered responses to Ofsted's pupil survey and Ofsted's staff survey. She considered responses to the parent survey, Ofsted Parent View, including free-text messages.

Inspection team

Liz Smith, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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