

Inspection of a good school: Colneis Junior School

Colneis Road, Felixstowe, Suffolk IP11 9HH

Inspection dates:

13 and 14 December 2022

Outcome

Colneis Junior School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils love attending this friendly school. They appreciate the many opportunities staff give them. Pupils are keen to learn. They share what they know with each other and with adults. They particularly enjoy and get excited about the outdoor learning.

Pupils know and understand the school's values. They benefit from a supportive, caring environment which encourages the school's mantra of 'together we're better'. Pupils talk about how 'acceptance' helps them understand how some people are different from them.

Pupils support each other well. They treat others with respect and kindness. Older pupils willingly mentor younger pupils as they join key stage 2. They act as role models and as 'someone to look up to'. School and Eco council representatives are passionate about their roles to help make the school better for everyone.

There are clear routines and expectations of how pupils should behave. Pupils respond well to these and expect each other to behave well. They enjoy being rewarded for 'doing the right thing'. It is rare that poor behaviour interrupts lessons. Pupils concentrate well in lessons. They are happy and enjoy learning the interesting curriculum leaders have planned.

Pupils know that adults will listen to what they say. Bullying is rare because adults help pupils sort things out at an early stage.

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

Leaders have designed an ambitious curriculum. This identifies the important knowledge that pupils need to know and remember, and the order they need to learn it. The curriculum is designed to help pupils make connections between their learning in different subjects. Consequently, pupils develop a detailed knowledge in most subjects and learn well.

Teachers have strong subject knowledge in most subjects. They use this well to help pupils revise and apply their new knowledge. In mathematics, for example, teachers quickly identify misconceptions, helping pupils transfer knowledge to their long-term memory.

In a few subjects, leaders are still refining the curriculum. They have not precisely identified the knowledge pupils will learn and in what order. Where this is the case, pupils do not consistently connect all their learning with what they already know. Teachers' subject knowledge in these few subjects is less strong, which means they do not correct misconceptions quickly.

Reading sits at the heart of the school's curriculum. Pupils love to read, and they enjoy spending time in the new well-stocked library area. They enjoy reading and listening to the carefully chosen class texts, which are selected to support a theme in the curriculum. Books that the youngest pupils read are closely matched to the sounds they learn in class. Pupils read accurately and fluently because they receive high-quality phonics teaching. Staff support the weakest readers well to catch up with their peers and to enable them to access the full curriculum.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) have their needs accurately identified. They learn the same curriculum as their peers. Staff provide effective support for pupils and their families. Senior leaders provide useful support for staff to help them provide well for pupils with SEND. Staff have the expertise to support pupils to achieve their precise targets. Consequently, pupils with SEND achieve well.

Pupils behave well during lessons and around the school. They respond well to the positive behaviour reward systems in place. Adults provide effective support for pupils' social and emotional needs. As a result, the school is calm and purposeful.

The school's values, such as respect, trust and acceptance, are well understood by pupils. They learn about these values and how they contribute to improving their character. Pupils benefit from a range of extra opportunities and gain a deep understanding of the world around them. They relish the opportunities the school offers. Pupils regularly participate in music, sport and theatre activities, some of which they would not normally experience. As a result, pupils become confident, independent learners who are keen to try new things.

Leaders have built positive relationships with pupils, parents and staff, all of whom express great confidence in leaders. Staff are proud to work in the school. Leaders support staff well. The governing body and local authority have closely monitored the school's improvement plans and visit the school regularly. This has ensured that improving the quality of education has remained a priority.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff receive regular training to keep their knowledge of safeguarding up to date. Staff are vigilant. Leaders follow up concerns about pupils' well-being or safety tenaciously. Where external professional support is necessary to complement the strong pastoral support the school provides, leaders ensure this is promptly put in place.

Pupils learn how to stay safe at home, in school and online through their computing and their personal, social and health education lessons. Pupils say that staff make time to listen to them. This means that pupils are confident to speak out if anything is worrying them. Appropriate safe recruitment and pre-employment checks are undertaken.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a few areas of the curriculum, leaders have not precisely clarified and organised what pupils need to learn. Pupils do not learn as well in these small number of subjects as they do in the rest of the curriculum. Leaders should ensure the knowledge and skills that pupils are expected to learn are set out and taught in a logical order so that pupils achieve well across the curriculum. Leaders should also provide training and support for teachers to help them implement the curriculum effectively.

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 March 2017.

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

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| Unique reference number | 124624 |
| Local authority | Suffolk |
| Inspection number | 10241552 |
| Type of school | Junior |
| School category | Maintained |
| Age range of pupils | 7 to 11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 357 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair of governing body | Allison Coleman |
| Executive Headteacher | Mark Girling |
| Website | www.fairfieldandcolneis.co.uk/ |
| Date of previous inspection | 22 March 2017, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 |

Information about this school

- The school is part of a hard federation with Fairfield Infant School.
- The executive headteacher leads both schools. One governing body oversees both schools.

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 their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector held discussions with governors, a representative of the local authority, the executive headteacher, the deputy headteacher, the special educational needs coordinator, the pastoral team, teachers and pupils.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and computing. For each deep dive, the inspector discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons with senior leaders, spoke with teachers, spoke with some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work in subject books and class scrapbooks of some other subjects.

- The inspector spoke with leaders, the school business manager, staff and pupils about safeguarding policies and practices at the school.
- A range of documents were scrutinised during the inspection, including curriculum plans, school development plans, curricular reviews, both internal to the school and external, the minutes of governing body meetings and safeguarding records.
- The inspector spoke with groups of pupils about their experiences of school life and their learning in lessons to understand what it is like to be a pupil in their school. The inspector also observed the behaviour of pupils across the school site.
- Forty-three responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, and 44 free-text comments were considered as part of the inspection evidence, alongside 17 responses to Ofsted's staff survey and 45 responses to the pupil survey.

Inspection team

Ruth Brock, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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