

Inspection of an outstanding school: Kelvedon St Mary's Church of England Primary Academy

Docwra Road, Kelvedon, Colchester, Essex CO5 9DS

Inspection dates:

14 and 15 December 2022

Outcome

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of outstanding as a result of this ungraded (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might not be as high if a graded (section 5) inspection were carried out now. The next inspection will therefore be a graded inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy being part of the school. They embrace the school's values of 'resourceful, reflective, reasoning, risk-taking, resilient and responsible', the 6Rs. They strive to implement these behaviours in their day-to-day lives. Pupils wear their 6R badges with pride.

Expectations of pupils to achieve well are high. Pupils access a broad and ambitious curriculum. They develop a secure knowledge in most subjects. However, while this is the case, pupils' understanding is not as secure where the curriculum has been newly introduced. Pupils try hard and are excited by their learning. Pupils have good attitudes towards learning. This enables pupils to achieve well, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

Pupils are respectful and polite. They behave well. On the very rare occasions that bullying takes place, pupils know that staff will deal with it quickly. Pupils feel and are safe.

Leadership opportunities, for example school council and holy council, are valued by pupils. They appreciate that leaders listen to and take on their ideas about how to improve the school and how to help others who are less fortunate than themselves.

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

Leaders have carefully considered what pupils need to know. In most subject areas, they have reviewed and put in place a new curriculum to ensure that it is broad and ambitious for all pupils. Leaders have introduced the new curriculum in a phased approach based on

their own checks. This phased introduction has helped to manage the workload and well-being of staff. Staff are appreciative of this.

While the curriculum is well planned, there is not a consistent approach to how the curriculum is taught. This is because leaders have not provided the support, training and guidance that teachers need. As a result, pupils do not learn the knowledge they require as securely as they need to use it as confidently and successfully as they could in the next steps of their learning. Teachers use questioning well to identify gaps and misconceptions in pupils' knowledge. They use this information to adapt their planning and teaching so that any gaps in pupils' learning are closed. This enables pupils to know and remember much of the information that they need.

Leaders prioritise reading in the school. Pupils are encouraged to make use of the well-resourced library. Pupils develop a love of reading. For example, children in Nursery talk with excitement about stories such as 'The Gruffalo' that they listen to. Training and guidance have helped teachers to teach phonics consistently well. Reading books are well matched to the sounds that pupils know. Teachers carefully identify pupils who are falling behind with their reading. Effective support is put in place to help them catch up quickly. Effective teaching and support help pupils become confident, fluent readers.

Teachers use individual plans well to support pupils with SEND to make progress. The specially resourced provision for pupils with autism spectrum disorder (specially resourced provision) on site provides specialised support for individual pupils with SEND. Staff in the specially resourced provision use their expertise to upskill other staff effectively. This helps pupils with more complex SEND needs to integrate successfully into the classroom alongside their peers. As a result, pupils with SEND access the same learning as their peers, and this provides them with the opportunities to achieve well.

Children in early years show positive learning behaviours. They start learning to read quickly and develop a good understanding of number. Activities are planned to support children to develop the skills that they most need. This begins in Nursery where staff focus specifically on the development of children's fine motor skills, communication and language to ensure they can successfully access the curriculum in Year 1.

Leaders ensure that pupils learn about important areas such as democracy to help them be well prepared for life in modern Britain. The personal, social and health education curriculum helps pupils to build their knowledge in an age-appropriate way. Assemblies, trips and visitors to school support and help to broaden pupils' understanding of the curriculum. The strong link between the church and the school promotes the school's Christian ethos. Pupils are knowledgeable about other faiths and show respect for other's views.

The trust and governors have an accurate view of the school's many strengths but are clear on the areas that need further development. They provide challenge and support and make regular visits to ensure that leaders are making progress on the key priorities to improve the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff, including those responsible for governance, are well trained in keeping children safe. Regular updates enable early support to be put in place for pupils and parents when this is needed. Staff know the signs that pupils may be at risk of harm and know how to report a concern. Leaders effectively record and monitor safeguarding concerns. Records are detailed and followed up in a timely and appropriate manner. External support is used, where required, to support vulnerable pupils and families.

Pupils are confident through their learning about how to stay safe in the locality and also when online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have recently identified the need to introduce new curriculum content in several subjects to meet the needs of all pupils in the school. Implementation is in its infancy. As a result, in some subjects, the curriculum is not taught consistently. While pupils achieve well, they do not develop as deep an understanding as they could. Subject leaders need to provide staff with the support, guidance and training that they need to teach the new curriculum content consistently well.

Background

When we have judged a school to be outstanding, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains outstanding. 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 outstanding in February 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	139360
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	10199518
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	431
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Andy Hayman
Headteacher	Lois Osborne
Website	www.kelvedonacademy.com
Date of previous inspection	2 and 3 February 2016

Information about this school

- Kelvedon St Mary’s Church of England Primary Academy is a larger-than-average-size primary school.
- The headteacher was appointed in September 2022. She also acts as the chief executive officer of the Canonium Learning Trust, to which the school belongs.
- The school has a specially resourced provision for pupils with autism spectrum disorder. There are five places available in this provision. Places are funded by Essex County Council. Pupils access the provision alongside their mainstream education.
- Leaders do not use any alternative provision.
- The school has a Christian character and ethos. It is part of the diocese of Chelmsford. The last Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools was in November 2016 when the school was judged to be outstanding.
- The school took over the previous private Nursery provision which was on site in January 2019. A new Nursery building was opened in October 2021.

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 the headteacher, members of the senior leadership team, curriculum leaders, support staff, an early career teacher, members of the local governing body and a number of trustees. He also spoke to a representative from the diocese.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, science and physical education. For each deep dive, the inspector met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspector scrutinised the single central record, met with the designated safeguarding lead and examined safeguarding records. The inspector spoke to pupils and staff about safeguarding.
- The inspector visited the specially resourced provision for pupils with autism spectrum disorder that is on site to speak to staff and pupils.
- The inspector spoke to groups of pupils who held pupil leadership responsibilities in the school.
- The inspector considered the 27 responses and 23 free-text responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View. The inspector also reviewed the 26 responses to Ofsted's staff survey. There were no responses to Ofsted's pupil survey.

Inspection team

Wayne Jarvis, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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