

Inspection of Stisted Church of England Primary Academy

The Street, Stisted, Braintree, Essex CM77 8AN

Inspection dates: 7 and 8 March 2023

Overall effectiveness

Outstanding

The quality of education

Outstanding

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Outstanding

Early years provision

Outstanding

Previous inspection grade

Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Ofsted has not previously inspected Stisted Church of England Primary Academy under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. However, Ofsted previously judged Stisted Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School to be outstanding, before it opened as Stisted Church of England Primary Academy as a result of conversion to academy status.

What is it like to attend this school?

From the youngest to the oldest, pupils delight in coming to school. The warm and caring environment provides a safe space for them to thrive and flourish. Adults set the highest standards for pupils. Pupils live up to these expectations, trying their very best in lessons and achieving extremely well.

Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. A culture of respect flows through the school. This means bullying is rare. Adults keep a close eye on how pupils are feeling. If a problem occurs, pupils know that adults are on hand to help them. Pupils know that they are all different in their own special way. These differences are respected and celebrated, creating a harmonious environment.

Basil, the school dog, is much loved. He provides comfort to pupils if they are upset or need help to manage their emotions. Those with the responsibility for walking him take great pride in doing so. The youngest children are supported to take well-considered risks in the forest area. Older pupils love the opportunity to speak in public. They spend time with residents in the local care home and take on additional responsibility in school. These opportunities lead to pupils developing into confident and active citizens.

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

Pupils receive an exceptional education. The school community works as one to ensure that pupils receive nothing but the best. The balance between academic excellence and personal development means pupils leave the school at the end of Year 6 as well-rounded, compassionate and knowledgeable young people.

Leaders have designed a curriculum that sets out with great precision the knowledge pupils need to know and remember based on their age and stage of learning. This is a meticulously planned learning journey from the start of Reception to the end of Year 6. Due to leaders' carefully constructed curriculum, pupils always use what they know to help them learn more. In French, for example, pupils learn important vocabulary from a young age. They set about using this to write sentences and then more complex paragraphs as they move through the school.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) follow the same ambitious curriculum as their peers. Adults skilfully adapt activities, which pupils with SEND complete when necessary. Pupils with SEND learn the same content, but in a slightly different way. In all subjects, all pupils acquire a rich and detailed knowledge of the topics they study.

Teachers are skilled at explaining new ideas and concepts. They make accurate checks to ensure that pupils understand new learning before they move on. This is especially the case when teaching the youngest children to read. Any errors are quickly identified and corrected. Pupils who need additional support with reading

receive effective help. They catch up quickly. Consequently, pupils become accurate and confident readers. As they move through the school, pupils are immersed in high-quality texts. They learn, and correctly use, complex vocabulary, developing a real love of reading.

Pupils experience lessons that are interesting and make them think. They have highly positive attitudes to their learning. Consequently, lessons are rarely disrupted, and no time is wasted.

The provision for pupils' personal development is exceptional. Pupils benefit enormously from the well-considered personal development programme. They try new things, persevere and widen their horizons. Much of this strong work helps pupils to develop their character and independence. They learn about different relationships through the school's highly effective relationships and sex education provision. Pupils receive well-tailored support if they need help managing their emotions and feelings. They learn how to support their own mental health and what to do if they feel upset, angry or frustrated. The regular 'nurture groups' play a key part in this support.

Children in Reception learn in a caring and nurturing environment. Adults working with the youngest children are highly skilled; they know children extremely well. This means they provide activities to help children develop the knowledge, skills and attributes they need for Year 1. Children in Reception are guided to become increasingly independent and resilient. They are keen and ready for the highlight of the year: the overnight sleep over. Before this, they help to prepare their end-of-year barbeque, using some food they have grown in the allotment area.

Trustees and members of the teaching and learning council know the school well. They work strategically, providing highly effective support for leaders. However, they do not shy away from challenging leaders to make the school even better.

Staff are extremely proud to work at the school. They receive high-quality training to continually polish and refine their practice. Senior leaders take great care in managing the workload and well-being of teachers.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff receive regular training to ensure they know what to do if they have concerns about a pupil. All concerns are reported, no matter how minor. If pupils or their families need additional support, leaders put this in place quickly. This includes working with external agencies if necessary. All required checks on adults are carried out before they start working in the school.

Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe, especially when they use the internet. Trustees keep a close eye on safeguarding. They check to make sure that leaders are doing all they can to keep pupils safe.

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	137544
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	10242272
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	104
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Andy Hayman
Headteacher	Martin Hawrylak (Executive Headteacher)
Website	www.stisted-academy.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Canonium Learning Trust.
- The executive headteacher has recently taken over the leadership of another school in the trust. He now leads both schools.
- The school has a Christian religious character. The school's most recent section 48 inspection of its religious character took place in June 2018. The school's next section 48 inspection will be within eight school years.
- The school uses one registered alternative provider.

Information about this inspection

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.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, physical education and languages. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The lead inspector listened to pupils from Years 1, 2 and 3 read to an adult.
- Inspectors spoke with leaders and pupils about several other subjects.
- Inspectors held meetings with the executive headteacher and other senior leaders. The lead inspector met with members of the teaching and learning council, trustees, and the chief executive officer. The lead inspector also held separate telephone calls with a representative of the local authority and a representative of the diocese of Chelmsford.
- To inspect safeguarding, inspectors scrutinised the single central record and reviewed safeguarding paperwork and systems. Inspectors spoke with leaders, teachers, support staff, members of the governing body, trustees, and pupils to evaluate the culture of safeguarding in school.
- Inspectors considered 61 responses to Ofsted's questionnaire for parents, Parent View. There were no responses to the questionnaires for staff or pupils.

Inspection team

Nathan Lowe, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Charlotte Martin

Ofsted Inspector

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