

Inspection of Great Sampford Community Primary School

Finchingfield Road, Great Sampford, Saffron Walden, Essex CB10 2RL

Inspection dates: 25 and 26 April 2023

Overall effectiveness **Good**

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, and children in early years, flourish at this welcoming school. There is a deep sense of togetherness. Pupils show care and consideration towards each other. They enjoy spending time together and playing with their friends at breaktimes. Pupils who are new to the school are supported to settle in quickly.

Relationships between pupils and staff are strong. Adults expect the very best from pupils. They respond to these high expectations by working hard in class. Pupils know that staff care for them. Leaders deal with any concerns that are raised by pupils quickly and effectively. This includes any incidents of bullying. Pupils value the support that staff provide, particularly with their emotional health and well-being. Pupils feel safe.

Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), play an active part in school life. Pupils enjoy the extracurricular clubs on offer. They enjoy the roles and responsibilities they have and the fact that they are helping to improve the school.

Parents and carers are a valued part of the school community. They appreciate the support that their children receive. Parents know that they can approach staff if they have a concern and that they will listen and take action.

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

Leaders have worked together to develop an ambitious curriculum that meets the needs of all pupils. In most subjects, they have identified the small steps that help pupils to develop their knowledge over time. However, in some subjects, leaders have not identified the knowledge that they want pupils to learn in sufficient detail. This means that, occasionally, some pupils' learning does not build securely on what they know already.

Reading is central to the school's curriculum. Teachers teach the reading curriculum well. They inspire pupils to develop a love of reading. Pupils read regularly at home and enjoy sharing stories throughout the day. Pupils have access to an increasingly diverse range of texts in school. This contributes towards most pupils becoming confident and fluent readers.

Leaders are implementing a new phonics programme well. Children in the Reception class begin to learn the connections between sounds and letters as soon as they start school. Staff check that pupils are learning their letter sounds. They provide high-quality support for any pupils who struggle, so that they quickly catch up with their classmates.

On occasions, some younger pupils' reading books do not match their phonic knowledge. These pupils, who struggle with reading, find their books too hard to read. This means that they cannot apply what they know about phonics to develop

fluency in their reading. Leaders recognise this variability and are addressing it. There is ongoing investment in good-quality books that are matched to pupils' abilities.

Teachers have secure knowledge of the subjects they teach. They explain new concepts clearly to pupils. Leaders have considered when pupils will revisit key concepts to ensure that this builds on what pupils have learned before. Teachers check what pupils know and remember. They use this information to adapt lessons to meet the needs of pupils. Pupils know that getting things incorrect or having time to improve their work will support their learning.

Leaders have designed systems to identify and support pupils with SEND effectively. Leaders are determined that these pupils will experience the same ambitious curriculum as their peers. Teachers make appropriate adaptations to the delivery of the curriculum to help these pupils to succeed. Many parents told inspectors how they value the personalised support that staff provide for pupils with SEND to ensure that pupils are successful and achieve well.

Pupils settle quickly whenever they join the school. They value and respect each other. Most behave well and have positive attitudes towards learning. Pupils can usually learn without disruption, listening and responding well to teachers' instructions. Pupils enjoy taking responsibility in class and across the school. This helps them to become mature, independent members of the school community.

Leaders extend pupils' learning beyond the classroom. Pupils are involved in a myriad of experiences that prepare them well for life in modern Britain. For example, the election of the school council and house captains helps pupils to understand democracy. Pupils know about the importance of exercise and mental health. Leaders ensure that pupils learn about healthy relationships in an age-appropriate way.

Staff well-being is a priority for leaders. Staff see themselves as being part of one team, working together for the success of everyone.

Governors have a clear and accurate understanding of the school's strengths and priorities. They use this information well to both challenge and support leaders.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

This school has a strong culture of care. Leaders provide regular training for staff and governors. They check that staff know how to spot and report pupils who are at risk.

Governors maintain a keen oversight of the effectiveness of leaders' arrangements to safeguard pupils. They are involved in employing new staff and ensure that the school follows the appropriate procedures for safer recruitment.

Pupils are clear about whom to speak to if they have a concern. The curriculum provides opportunities for pupils to learn how to stay safe. Pupils understand how to keep themselves safe, including when learning online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- A small number of younger pupils who have difficulty with reading find their reading books too hard to read. This prevents them from applying their knowledge of phonics successfully and means that they are unable to read with fluency. They do not learn to read as well as they could. Leaders should ensure that they enable these pupils to develop their reading fluency more securely by providing them with reading books that more closely match their phonic knowledge.
- In a small number of subjects, leaders have not precisely identified the essential knowledge that they want pupils to learn. As a result, some pupils' learning in these subjects does not build on what they have learned before. Leaders should finalise the design of the curriculum in these remaining subjects, so that teachers are clear about the knowledge pupils should know and remember.

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	114970
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	10255067
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	86
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Andrew Shelley
Headteacher	Amy Reis
Website	www.greatsampford.essex.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	6 October 2020, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The current acting headteacher took up the post in January 2023.
- The school does not use any alternative providers.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the acting headteacher, senior leaders, the special educational needs and/or disabilities coordinator, six governors and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors met with the designated safeguarding lead to discuss the actions taken to keep pupils safe. The inspector also reviewed a range of documents related to safeguarding, including the school's single central record.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers and pupils and looked at samples of pupils' work. The lead inspector also spoke to leaders about the curriculum in some other subjects.
- The lead inspector heard pupils from key stage 1 and key stage 2 read to a member of staff.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documents, including the school's self-evaluation and improvement plans.
- To gather the views of pupils, inspectors spoke to groups of pupils, including in lessons, at breaktime and at lunchtime. The 32 responses to the Ofsted pupil survey were reviewed.
- To gather the views of parents, inspectors spoke to some parents and reviewed the 42 responses to Ofsted Parent View, including 41 free-text comments.
- To gather the views of staff, the inspector spoke to several staff. The inspector also took account of the 10 responses to the Ofsted staff survey.
- The lead inspector also considered other correspondence received during the inspection.

Inspection team

Simon Eardley, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Nicola Shadbolt

Ofsted Inspector

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