

Inspection of a good school: Edward Francis Primary School

Uplands Park Road, Rayleigh, Essex SS6 8AJ

Inspection dates:

19 and 20 April 2023

Outcome

Edward Francis Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy and safe at this school. They value the relationships that they have with their teachers, who make learning fun. Pupils are polite to each other and have a strong sense of right and wrong.

Leaders have high expectations of all pupils' work and behaviour. Pupils behave well in lessons and on the school playground. They enjoy using the equipment and playing games. Pupils do not worry about bullying because it 'hardly ever happens'. When it does, staff deal with it quickly and it stops.

Pupils are very eager to learn and have positive attitudes to learning. They get excited by the interesting curriculum content and read often and widely. The topics they study are rich in new knowledge, particularly in computing and history.

Pupils' personal development is a high priority. Pupils learn the importance of working together. They love to help and contribute to the school community in a variety of ways, including as eco representatives, house captains or on the school council. Many pupils attend one of the wide range of clubs and activities that are on offer. Tennis, gymnastics and dodgeball are very popular and help to develop pupils' fitness and teamwork skills.

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

Leaders have designed and developed an ambitious curriculum that inspires pupils to succeed. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), gain the knowledge that they need to achieve well. For example, in computing, pupils learn the technical knowledge and computing skills required to do well in the subject.

The curriculum is well organised. Subject leaders have set out what pupils should learn and when within each subject. They have carefully planned how best to ensure that pupils revisit and practise what they have learned. Teachers are skilled at giving clear explanations and setting tasks that help pupils to practise and apply their new learning.

Teachers use effective assessment strategies within English and mathematics to check on pupils' learning. They identify when pupils need extra support and provide useful help and guidance within lessons. As a result, pupils achieve well, particularly in English and mathematics. However, within the foundation subjects, assessment of the skills and knowledge identified in the curriculum lacks clarity. Therefore, subject leaders and teachers do not have a thorough understanding of how well the curriculum is being taught or how well pupils are remembering important key knowledge.

Leaders prioritise reading. They make sure that pupils read a wide range of different texts, which develops their fluency. Pupils regularly choose books from the library and look forward to the celebratory 'story assemblies'. Leaders ensure that staff receive effective training to teach phonics well. This means that pupils who are at the early stages of learning to read are supported to catch up quickly if they fall behind.

Leaders work closely with parents, local pre-schools and nurseries to ensure that children settle extremely well into the early years. The early years curriculum is well designed, and this ensures that children make a strong start to their education. Children are well prepared socially and academically when they start in key stage 1. For example, children develop secure reading and writing skills by the end of early years.

Pupils with SEND benefit from high-quality support. Leaders ensure that pupils with SEND are identified early. Teachers receive clear guidance about how to support pupils to achieve highly and are confident in adapting resources where appropriate. Staff have high expectations for pupils with SEND, and the majority of these pupils achieve well.

Leaders make sure that pupils conduct themselves well around the school and their behaviour is exemplary. Teachers have developed a culture where pupils are confident and keen to contribute to class discussions. Those pupils with leadership responsibilities, such as members of the eco-council, are proud of their roles in school.

Staff are proud to work at the school. They feel very well supported by leaders, who are mindful of their well-being and workload. Governors are committed to the school, and they provide leaders with effective support.

Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the school's work. Comments such as 'this is a caring, friendly and well-organised school that works well with parents to ensure pupils excel and are happy and well-rounded' were typical of the many responses given.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have established effective systems to manage safeguarding. These help to keep pupils safe from harm. Staff and governors access frequent training on safeguarding. This improves their knowledge of the risks that pupils might face, and what might indicate that a pupil is at risk of harm. Leaders respond in a timely manner when staff pass on concerns about pupils. This includes, where relevant, appropriate contact with outside agencies.

Pupils have secure knowledge of how to stay safe. They are taught practical examples of how to stay safe online and how to keep themselves safe when walking or cycling to school.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Processes for assessment in subjects other than English and mathematics do not focus on the knowledge and skills that pupils need to achieve in order to meet the outcomes of the National Curriculum. Consequently, teachers and subject leaders do not have a thorough enough understanding of how well the pupils are learning and remembering the key skills and knowledge identified by the school. Leaders should ensure that teachers are accurately assessing what pupils are learning in each year group so that they can accurately assess pupils' progress within all subjects.

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 second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in June 2013.

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	115012
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	10255243
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	421
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	June Lumley
Headteacher	Gary Soars
Website	www.edwardfrancisprimaryschool.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	28 September 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Leaders do not currently make use of alternative provision.
- A separate nursery provider operates within the school building. The provider was not considered as part of this inspection.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school has 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.
- During the inspection, the inspector met with the headteacher, the assistant headteacher and a number of staff members.
- The inspector met with two members of the governing body, including the chair of governors. The inspector met with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in early reading, computing and mathematics. For these, the inspector met with subject leaders, teachers and pupils. He visited lessons and looked at samples of pupils' work. The inspector observed pupils reading to a familiar adult.

- To evaluate the effectiveness of the school's arrangements for safeguarding, the inspector reviewed school policies, procedures and records. He met with the designated safeguarding lead. The inspector also spoke with staff, governors and pupils about the school's approach to keeping pupils safe.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around school.
- The inspector considered 103 responses to Ofsted Parent View and 29 responses from the staff questionnaires. There were no responses to Ofsted's pupil survey. However, pupils were spoken to during the inspection about their school experiences.

Inspection team

Joseph Figg, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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