

Inspection of an outstanding school: Lady Seaward's Church of England Primary School

Clyst St George, Exeter, Devon EX3 0RE

Inspection date:

26 April 2023

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 at Lady Seaward's Church of England School understand and follow the school's distinctive values. They respect the links that they have with the church and develop a strong moral code. Pupils show kindness and understanding towards their peers. They are polite and welcoming towards visitors. Pupils describe their school as 'small and cosy'. They know that staff will support them with any worries they have. They receive high levels of care and nurture.

Pupils benefit from a variety of planned visits to enhance the curriculum. For example, some pupils visited a museum and learned what it was like to be an evacuee during the Second World War. Pupils regularly attend extra-curricular clubs, which include construction club, 'mindfulness' and 'sporty stars'. Some pupils learn to play the flute, ukulele or guitar. The school orchestra performs at local events. Pupils take on key responsibilities, which include roles such as librarians and mental health ambassadors.

Pupils love to learn. However, in some subjects, pupils do not build up their learning in sufficient depth.

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

Leaders are ambitious for what they want pupils to learn. In subjects where this ambition is realised, the knowledge that they want pupils to know and remember is clearly identified. This builds in difficulty over time, so that pupils know and can do more. For example, in reading, pupils comment that the books they read help them to 'expand their imagination and vocabulary'. However, in some subjects, leaders are yet to fully consider what they want pupils to learn and by when. Therefore, pupils find it difficult to link what they are learning currently with what they have learned before.

Through well-considered and timely professional development, trust leaders support staff to develop appropriate knowledge of the subjects they teach and lead. Staff value this work. As a result, subject leaders understand what an effective curriculum should include. However, they do not have sufficient oversight of how well the curriculum is taught across the school, including in the early years foundation stage. This leads to inconsistencies in how successfully pupils learn.

Leaders understand the importance of reading. They instil these values and good habits in children as soon as they start school in the Reception Year. Pupils read widely for pleasure. Children in the early stages of reading learn the alphabetic code, which helps them to read unfamiliar words accurately. When pupils need extra support, staff put this in place. This helps pupils to become confident readers.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive the help that they need to learn the curriculum. Staff consider their barriers to learning carefully and put in place precise support to overcome these. However, for other pupils, staff do not use what they find out from their assessment of pupils' learning well enough. This means that sometimes pupils do not move on to new learning when they are ready to do so or develop misconceptions that continue unaddressed.

Leaders' work to strengthen the personal development curriculum has been highly effective. Pupils learn the expectations for behaviour through this curriculum. The agreed approaches to manage pupils' behaviour are well understood and are consistently applied. Pupils enjoy receiving certificates and 'family points' which recognise what they have done well. Low-level disruption is uncommon. The personal, social and health education curriculum reinforces the school's values, alongside British values. Pupils say that 'no one should be judged' negatively for their differences. Pupils visit places of worship from a range of religions. They sponsor a child from another country, which has allowed them to learn about a different culture.

Trustees regularly check the impact of leaders' work. They seek the views of staff. For example, they have set up networks and support groups for staff to use. Staff say that leaders consider the impact of school improvement work on their workload. They value the care and support they receive from leaders.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders, at all levels, understand the importance of safeguarding pupils. Staff receive timely and well-thought-out safeguarding training. They report any concerns clearly. Leaders act appropriately and swiftly. They carefully select the external agencies they work with. This means that pupils and their families get the help that they need, when they need it. The trust's central team make the correct checks when new staff start at the school. School leaders have sufficient oversight of these checks.

Pupils feel safe. This is because they learn what they need to know about how to keep themselves safe. For example, pupils understand the potential dangers of online technology or those that might exist when they are in the water.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, the important knowledge that pupils should learn, and by when, is not clearly identified. As a result, pupils find it difficult to make connections between their prior and current learning. Leaders should ensure that the curriculum identifies key knowledge and concepts in all subjects.
- In some subjects, staff do not use what they know from the assessment of pupils' learning well enough. This means that sometimes pupils do not build on what they already know, or they develop misconceptions which are not rectified. Leaders should ensure that staff use the assessment information they hold to inform pupils' future learning.
- Subject leaders do not have sufficient oversight of how well the curriculum is implemented in their subjects. Therefore, what pupils learn and how well they learn it is not consistent across the school. Leaders should ensure that subject leaders use their knowledge and expertise to check that the curriculum is taught as intended.

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 January 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	137642
Local authority	Devon
Inspection number	10199492
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	5 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	81
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Alexander Walmsley
Head of School	Michala Firth
Website	www.clyst-st-george.devon.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	12 and 13 January 2016, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of The First Federation Trust.
- The school is a voluntary-aided primary school. It was last inspected under section 48 of the Education Act 2005 on 19 September 2016.
- The head of school joined the school in October 2022.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- 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 met with the head of school and the special educational needs coordinator (SENCo). They met with multi-academy trust leaders, including the chief executive officer, the director of performance and development and the school improvement officer. The lead inspector met with trustees, the governance officer and a parent representative from the hub advisory board.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The lead inspector spoke with the designated safeguarding leader, the school improvement officer and the SENCo to discuss the school's procedures for keeping pupils safe. She considered the school's recruitment procedures, staff induction and training, records of concern and engagement with external agencies. The inspectors spoke with staff and pupils throughout the inspection to gauge their views of the school.
- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View, including free-text responses. Inspectors also considered responses to staff and pupil surveys.

Inspection team

Donna Briggs, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Liz Geller

His Majesty's Inspector

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