

Inspection of Graveley Primary School

Ashwell Common, Graveley, Hitchin, Hertfordshire SG4 7LJ

Inspection dates: 16 and 17 May 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?

Inclusion and nurture are at the heart of Graveley Primary School. There are cordial relationships between everyone. Pupils feel cared for, and this helps them thrive. Parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive about the school.

Leaders are ambitious for all pupils to achieve highly. This includes those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Classrooms are calm and pupils work hard. Right from the early years, pupils show positive attitudes towards learning.

Leaders have high expectations, and pupils show good conduct at all times. Pupils say bullying rarely happens. They trust adults to sort it out quickly. Pupils feel very safe at school.

There are many opportunities for pupils to take on responsibilities. The pupil parliament members are very proud that their suggestion for a school dog was a success. 'Kai', the school dog, greets everyone with his waggy tail as they arrive for school. He helps pupils who are anxious to settle and have a good day.

The Christian values of 'fellowship, creativity and harmony' thread through all aspects of school life. Pupils explain how they try to show the values at school and home, for example by being a good friend to everyone.

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

Reading has a high priority across the school. Older pupils enjoy incentives which motivate them to read widely. They are enthusiastic about reading, including the books their teachers read to them. Phonics teaching begins as soon as children start in Reception. Well-trained staff show expertise when delivering the phonics lessons. This means pupils quickly gain the knowledge and skills needed to become fluent and accurate readers. Pupils have books that carefully match the sounds they know. This helps them practise and develop confidence. Teachers are swift to spot any pupils who may be falling behind with their reading. Staff help these pupils to catch up quickly.

Pupils benefit from the broad and ambitious curriculum. Subject curriculums are well sequenced, with the important knowledge that pupils should learn clearly identified. Teachers receive expert training that helps them deliver high-quality lessons. Some subjects are more established than others. Where leaders have carefully adapted the curriculum to suit the mixed-age classes, pupils build on what they know and achieve well. This is not yet in place for all subjects. Some subjects have systems in place to check what pupils know and understand. This helps teachers identify gaps quickly. Leaders are working to develop a similar, highly consistent approach to assessment in all subjects.

The provision for pupils with SEND is a strength. Pupils receive effective support. Leaders use their expertise to accurately identify pupils' needs. Teachers make skilful adaptations so pupils with SEND can learn alongside their peers. This helps them experience success. Skilled adults deliver carefully planned, personalised support to pupils who need it. They know the pupils very well, and relationships are strong and caring. Parents praise the support the school gives their children. Leaders seek and act on guidance from external professionals to help them meet the needs of pupils with the highest level of SEND.

Pupils behave well. Leaders support behaviour in a way that helps pupils learn to be responsible. This involves adults using consistent language when talking to pupils about their behaviour. Pupils understand this approach and say it helps them feel safe. In Reception, coaching helps children learn how to negotiate and cooperate. The impact of this was seen when a bridge a child was building got broken by another child. An adult supported both children to work together as a team to rebuild the bridge.

There is a well-planned personal, social and health education curriculum. This helps pupils develop their understanding of people who are different to themselves. Pupils are very tolerant and respectful towards each other. Older pupils talk maturely about their relationships and sex education lessons. They say they help them to understand how they will change and to not feel scared about the future. Leaders provide a range of extra-curricular experiences, including after-school clubs. Pupils enjoy using public transport to visit places such as Cambridge. They also get the chance to take part in sporting events alongside other local schools.

Governors know the school and its priorities well. They provide effective support and challenge to school leaders. Staff, including those new to the school and the profession, feel that their workload is manageable. They are proud to work at the school, and appreciate the high-quality training and support leaders provide. This helps them continually develop their practice.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

All adults, including governors, receive high-quality training. They know how to report concerns. Adults know pupils well and know the signs that may indicate a pupil is at risk of harm. Leaders respond to concerns promptly. They involve parents and external agencies to get the best support for pupils. All mandatory checks are made on adults working with pupils.

Pupils feel safe at school and trust adults to help them if they are worried. The curriculum ensures pupils learn how to stay safe at school, at home and when they are online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, assessment is not as well developed as in others. In these subjects, teachers do not always identify the next steps in learning as precisely as they could. Leaders should ensure that strategies are in place so teachers know what pupils know and remember. This information should be used to adapt lessons and subsequent learning to enable pupils to achieve highly.
- In a small number of subjects, curriculum plans are new. In these subjects, plans are not fully adapted so that the learning sequences and end-points meet the needs of mixed-age classes. This means that pupils do not always build on their prior knowledge over time. Leaders must ensure that all subject curriculums are coherently planned, sequenced and adapted to meet the needs of all pupils. This will ensure pupils receive high-quality lessons and make consistently good progress.

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	117395
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	10287099
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	92
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	David Marriott
Headteacher	Nicky Hand
Website	www.graveley.herts.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	8 March 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is a Church of England primary school which is part of the Diocese of St Albans.
- The school's most recent inspection of its religious character under section 48 of the Education Act 2005 was on 5 March 2019. The school will receive its next section 48 inspection within eight years of that date.
- The school operates its own breakfast club.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The 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 met with the headteacher and the deputy headteacher. Inspectors spoke to a representative from the local authority, the chair of the governing board and another governor. Meetings were also held with curriculum leaders and the special educational needs and disabilities leader. Inspectors also met with a range of other staff and spoke to pupils and parents.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, computing and music. For each deep dive, inspectors 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. In early reading, this took the form of listening to pupils read to a familiar adult.
- Inspectors also spoke to pupils in the lunch hall and on the playground, and spoke to parents.
- As part of the evaluation of the school's safeguarding processes, inspectors reviewed the school's single central record and met with the designated safeguarding leads.
- The inspectors reviewed a range of school documents, including the school development plan, curriculum plans and school policies.
- Inspectors reviewed the 28 responses that were submitted by parents to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View, and also considered the 20 free-text responses from parents. The inspectors also considered 15 responses to the Ofsted staff survey.

Inspection team

Karen Stanton, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Joe Creswick

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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Textphone: 0161 618 8524
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