

Inspection of Chulmleigh Primary School

Beacon Road, Chulmleigh, Devon EX18 7AA

Inspection dates: 27 and 28 September 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	Requires improvement

The headteacher of this school is Martin Evely. This school is part of Chulmleigh Academy Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Michael Johnson, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Stephen Baber.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy coming to this happy school. The school encourages pupils to be kind, compassionate and respectful to each other. Pupils live up to this expectation. Parents value the school's nurturing environment and its high ambition for what pupils can achieve. Pupils, of all ages, are safe and well cared for.

Pupils relish their time outdoors during break and lunchtimes. They love the mud slide, drawing area and bug hotel, for example. The youngest children enjoy the 'woody wonder' sessions each week. Pupils use the local environment as a stimulus for learning, such as a poetry project inspired by the local river.

Pupils have a strong voice in the school. They learn the importance of their rights and responsibilities. Older children look out for younger children and take up roles as school librarians and councillors, for instance. Pupils champion important causes, such as raising money for their chosen charities. Pupils learn to be reflective and discuss important ideas. They learn to listen to others' opinions and to empathise with those who have faced challenges in their lives.

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

The school has designed an ambitious curriculum. It gives pupils the knowledge and skills they need to succeed in life. The curriculum is well sequenced, starting in the early years and leading to what pupils need to know in Year 6. Staff in the early years have a clear focus on developing children's spoken language. This helps them learn to communicate effectively.

In most subjects, the school has considered carefully the most important knowledge and skills pupils need to learn. For example, the school has planned which significant figures pupils learn about in history. However, in a few subjects the curriculum does not identify precisely what is crucial for pupils to learn. In the early years, this means children do not always acquire the detailed knowledge they need to prepare them well for Year 1.

Teachers have secure subject knowledge. Where the curriculum is well embedded, teaching helps pupils to remember their previous learning. For instance, through the early reading curriculum pupils gain the phonic knowledge required to read accurately. However, where subject curriculums are newer, pupils sometimes have gaps in their learning. The school does not identify and remedy these gaps well.

Pupils enjoy reading. The youngest children get to know nursery rhymes, songs and familiar stories well. The school celebrates literature, through visiting authors and trips to the local library, for example. Leaders have chosen books thoughtfully to develop pupils' understanding of diversity. Pupils, of all ages, read books which are well matched to their reading ability and interests.

The school has recently strengthened the support it provides for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils' needs are identified accurately, so the curriculum is typically designed and adapted effectively for them. Most pupils with SEND learn well, and with increasing independence.

Pupils have positive attitudes to learning and are eager to share their ideas. Pupils learn how to cooperate with each other. For example, pupils help each other clean their wellies at the end of outdoor play. From the early years, children learn routines and follow these. As a result, the school has a calm and orderly atmosphere.

Pupils follow a valuable personal, social and health education curriculum. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe, including when online. The school has planned carefully what pupils learn about and when. For instance, pupils learn about beach safety before the summer holidays. The school places a strong emphasis on pupils' mental well-being. Pupils learn ways to keep themselves mentally healthy, such as through eating and sleeping well. Children in the early years start to learn how to talk about their feelings.

The school has recently increased the range of extra-curricular activities on offer. Many pupils enjoy participating in sports, the choir and movie club, for example. The school is beginning to check which pupils take part in such opportunities and that there are no barriers to pupils' participation.

Trustees understand their role. They provide strategic direction and ensure that resources are well managed. The trust and the school have worked successfully to improve the quality of education that pupils receive. Staff value their professional learning which supports them to develop their teaching.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a few subjects, the school has not identified precisely enough the knowledge and skills that are important for pupils to learn. Consequently, pupils do not always build their knowledge and skills on what they already know and can do. The trust should ensure that the curriculum sets out precisely what pupils should learn and by when in all subjects.
- In some subjects, teachers' use of assessment does not check that pupils learn the curriculum as intended. As a result, pupils sometimes have gaps in their knowledge or develop misconceptions. The school and trust should ensure that assessment is used to identify and rectify gaps or misconceptions in pupils' learning.

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' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	137023
Local authority	Devon
Inspection number	10284086
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	200
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Stephen Baber
Headteacher	Martin Evely
Website	www.chulmleigh-primary.devon.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	13 and 14 November 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school has provision for two-year-olds.
- The school does not use alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

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

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, and history. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, looked at curriculum planning, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors met a range of other subject leaders.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View, including free-text comments. Inspectors also considered the responses to Ofsted's online staff survey and to Ofsted's online pupil survey.

Inspection team

James Oldham, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Chris Gould

Ofsted Inspector

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