

Inspection of SET Felix

Maidstone Road, Felixstowe, Suffolk IP11 9ED

Inspection dates: 31 October to 1 November 2023

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Good

Early years provision

Good

Previous inspection grade

Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

The headteacher of this school is Jessica Hearn. This school is currently part of the Seckford Education Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Jonathon Taylor, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Peter Rout.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils at SET Felix are keen to learn and know that to do their best they need to be 'ready, safe and respectful'. They feel happy and safe and say that everyone is included at their school.

In the early years, children settle quickly and learn well. Pupils across the school know what they need to do and respond well to teachers' high expectations. In lessons, they behave well. They work together and share ideas.

The new leaders have raised the bar. Staff and pupils now expect more of themselves and each other. Rightly, there have been recent changes to the curriculum. Although pupils are enjoying this new learning, some are struggling because they do not have the knowledge they need to understand the new content.

Pupils appreciate participating in the trips and events that are linked to their learning, such as visiting the beach and drawing local buildings. Pupils enjoy attending a wide range of sports clubs, such as dodgeball, multi-sports and gymnastics, and being part of the school council.

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

The new leadership team has wasted no time, rolling up their sleeves to make the necessary improvements to the curriculum. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), have access to the same ambitious and well-sequenced curriculum. Plans clearly show how learning builds from early years through to Year 6 and beyond in all subjects and what the key learning is at each stage.

In subjects where plans have been in place for a while, pupils are able to talk with confidence about what they are learning now and link it to what they have learned before. They build their knowledge and skills in accordance with the curriculum intent. However, this is not yet the case in those subjects that have had more recent changes. Some older pupils are not yet ready for the new curriculum, as they have not gained the knowledge they need to understand the ambitious and challenging concepts the school intends for them to learn.

Staff have received the right training to equip them with the knowledge to deliver the curriculum. They know what to teach, when to teach it and how to do this in the most effective way. Teachers make checks on pupils' knowledge during lessons, but they do not always use the results of these checks to tailor their planning. This means that some lessons contain content that pupils are not ready for and struggle to understand.

Younger pupils read well. The school uses an effective programme for the teaching of phonics and spelling. Adults have received training to deliver these sessions with confidence. Children in early years use the sounds they learn in these sessions to

successfully write words. Pupils who find reading difficult are given extra sessions to catch up. Books that are used in guided sessions are well chosen to extend pupils' reading experience. The school is continuing to develop the reading curriculum.

In early years, the school has designed an appropriate curriculum that has a clear focus on the development of language and vocabulary. Adults model the language they want children to use. Adults make effective use of the indoor and outdoor provision to teach key skills. Children are confident when speaking about their learning, showing concentration and developing resilience. They are well prepared for the Year 1 curriculum.

Provision for pupils with SEND is strong. There is a clear system in place to identify and support these pupils. Resources such as 'now and next' boards and the support of adults enable the curriculum to be adapted for pupils with SEND. Some pupils from the specially resourced provision for pupils with SEND (specially resourced provision) join mainstream classes for sessions, and the curriculum is carefully adapted for these pupils.

The school works hard to make sure that pupils attend every day. It provides a range of appropriate support and encouragement, including a weekly pumpkin award for attendance. However, some pupils still have gaps in their learning because they are not regularly in school.

The school has developed a curriculum that offers wider opportunities through focus days and celebrations. Through these, pupils learn about other faiths and about their local area and beyond.

There have been recent changes to leadership at the school. The school is now being well supported at trust level. Leaders are clear about what needs to improve, and they know that it will take time to embed the recent changes. Staff feel valued and say that careful thought is given to their well-being and workload.

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 short space of time, the leadership team, supported by the new trust, has put in place a revised curriculum to meet the needs of pupils. Some areas of the curriculum have not been in place long enough for pupils to have learned the planned content. In other instances, the previous weak curriculum has left pupils unable to understand the new, ambitious content. Leaders should ensure that the curriculum continues to be consistently delivered as planned so that pupils develop the knowledge that leaders intend.

- Although assessment information is collected by staff, it is not always effective in identifying gaps in pupils' prior learning. As a result, staff sometimes present new concepts and ideas to pupils who do not have the prerequisite knowledge to learn this new content. Leaders should ensure that all staff use assessment information with precision to identify any gaps in learning and address them before moving pupils on to their next steps.

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	147261
Local authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	10288576
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	270
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Peter Rout
Headteacher	Jessica Hearn
Website	https://www.felixprimary.org.uk/
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- SET Felix Primary School is currently part of the Seckford Education Trust. It is receiving formal support, in agreement with the Department for Education, from Sapientia Education Trust.
- SET Felix Primary School joined the trust in July 2019.
- The new headteacher started in post in September 2023.
- The school currently provides specially resourced provision for 48 pupils with autism and moderate learning difficulties within three class bases, one for pupils aged four to seven and two for pupils aged seven to 11.
- Leaders provide a daily breakfast club.
- Leaders currently do not use any registered alternative provider.

Information about this inspection

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

The inspectors carried out this inspection under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We deemed the inspection a graded (section 5) inspection under the same Act.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspectors met with the headteacher, senior leaders, subject leaders and other leaders and staff across the school.
- The inspectors met with the chief executive officer and one director from within the trust that is currently supporting the school.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics, art and design, computing and geography. In each subject, inspectors met with subject leaders, visited lessons, considered curriculum plans, spoke with pupils, looked at pupils' books, and met with class teachers and teaching assistants. The inspectors also observed pupils reading.
- To evaluate safeguarding, the inspectors met with the designated safeguarding lead to discuss the arrangements that are in place to support safeguarding. The inspectors scrutinised the single central record of pre-employment checks and the school's safeguarding records.
- The inspectors reviewed the school's behaviour records, including records of incidents of bullying and how these are followed up, and records of suspensions.
- A range of other information and documentation was reviewed by the inspectors, including information available on the school's website, school policies and information about the curriculum.
- The inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and at breaktimes.
- The inspectors considered the 19 responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, including 13 free-text comments. The inspector took account of the 40 responses to the staff survey. The inspector spoke with pupils to gather their views on the school. There were no responses to the pupil survey.

Inspection team

Heather Hann, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Sonia Innes	Ofsted Inspector
Ryan Freeman	Ofsted Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2023