

Inspection of Lee Chapel Primary School

The Knares, Basildon, Essex SS16 5RU

Inspection dates: 22 and 23 November 2023

Overall effectiveness

Outstanding

The quality of education

Outstanding

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Outstanding

Early years provision

Outstanding

Previous inspection grade

Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

The headteacher of this school is Sue Jackson. This school is part of Lee Chapel Multi-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 who is also the headteacher, Sue Jackson, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Craig O'Callaghan.

Ofsted has not previously inspected Lee Chapel Primary School under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. However, Ofsted previously judged Lee Chapel Primary School to be outstanding, before it opened as an academy.

What is it like to attend this school?

This school believes in finding the magic in every child. Pupils have lots of opportunities to find a talent and to pursue their interests. From swimming in the school's pool to holding a conversation in Spanish, there are many activities for pupils to tick off in their Quest booklets.

The school sparks pupils' imaginations. A life-size reading dragon greets pupils in reception and around every corner there are vibrant displays which encourage pupils to consider the best of what is thought and said. The lessons pupils receive are as inspiring as the artwork. As one pupil stated, reflecting the views of many, 'I wish our lessons were longer.'

Pupils love attending school and it is easy to see why. Staff highly value pupil voice. Subsequently, pupils develop confidence and independence. They are proud of their contributions to youth parliament, designing the school's adventure trail and taking part in many of the 65 clubs on offer.

Pupils' behaviour is excellent. They respond well to staff's high expectations. Many aspire to be leaders. They are eager to have responsibility, whether that is looking after the environment as an eco warrior or being a reading buddy.

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

Education at this school is truly exceptional. The high achievement of Year 6 is testament to the excellent education pupils receive from the start of their time here. Many pupils write and express ideas in advance of their years. This does not happen by chance.

The highly ambitious curriculum is child-centred. Staff carefully consider what pupils need to know as well as how to unlock their potential. They deepen and enrich the curriculum, giving pupils opportunities to follow their interests and talents. In Nursery, there is a sharp focus on developing children's communication skills and language. Staff are skilful at steering conversations, helping children to discover the world around them. The development of children's curiosity and a love of learning happens right from the start.

Throughout the school, staff are experts in the delivery of the curriculum. Many train other teachers from other schools across the trust. They undertake the latest research and enthuse pupils with their questions. Teachers are explicit in their explanations of difficult concepts, breaking down knowledge step-by-step. They also provide opportunities to revisit learning. In so doing, helping pupils recall their knowledge. Teachers watch closely to see when pupils have mastered key knowledge before moving them on. As a result, pupils talk about their learning with confidence. For example, debating the quality of surrealist and abstract art.

Children in Reception quickly learn to read. Across the many classes, staff deliver phonics expertly. Pupils gain confidence as they read books that contain the sounds they know. Pupils who need extra help get it, so they succeed. Older pupils are avid readers. They enjoy the reading games in their Just Read sessions, are proud of their reading habits and want to earn tokens for the school's book vending machine.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are equally well served by the curriculum. Where necessary, adults liaise with external professionals so pupils can get the help they need. The SEND team provide helpful guidance to staff so they can adjust provision appropriately. In lessons, staff use pupils' support plans effectively. They focus on removing barriers, and building pupils' independence so they enjoy learning alongside their peers. Staff are highly skilled at helping pupils who have complex behavioural needs, so they regain focus on their tasks.

The strong routines for behaviour begin in Nursery. Even at this young age, they sustain concentration and sit beautifully on the carpet for circle time. By the time pupils get to Year 6, they have developed a strong moral code. Pupils have high levels of respect for one another. Their maturity is striking.

Building pupils' self-esteem and confidence is a priority in the personal development programme. The access to specialist performing arts provision gives pupils the tools they need to speak publicly. Through this provision and their assemblies, pupils explore concepts such as diversity and acceptance. The comprehensive personal, social and health education (PSHE) curriculum gives pupils a thorough understanding of healthy relationships and what it means to stay safe online. There is high take up of the many clubs that are on offer.

The school is remarkably well led at all levels. School leaders, trustees and governors are extremely aspirational for all pupils. The sharp attention to detail and drive to offer the best possible education inspires staff. They love working at the school, feel valued and well looked after. The trust board and the local governing body have a strong understanding of what high-quality education is. Parents are effusive, many commenting on 'the school of our dreams'.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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	137108
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	10211842
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	1092
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Craig O'Callaghan
Headteacher	Sue Jackson
Website	www.leechapel.essex.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Lee Chapel Primary School converted to become an academy in August 2011. When its predecessor school, Lee Chapel Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be outstanding overall.
- The headteacher has remained the same since the last time the school was inspected by Ofsted.
- The Nursery has provision for two-year-olds.
- The school runs a before and after-school club.
- 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 routine 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.
- Inspectors met with the chair of the trust, the chair and the vice chair of the local governing body. They also met with the headteacher, senior leaders, subject leaders and staff.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics, science, art, history and physical education (PE). For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also considered the curriculum in other subjects, such as PSHE.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons, around school and at social times. They considered pupils' views about behaviour in the school. They also spoke with staff about pupils' behaviour, their workload and well-being.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the 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 considered responses to Ofsted's pupil survey and Ofsted's staff survey. They considered responses to the parent survey, Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses.

Inspection team

Liz Smith, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Bridget Harrison	His Majesty's Inspector
Conor Heaven	His Majesty's Inspector
Craige Brown	Ofsted Inspector
Laura Hower	Ofsted Inspector

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