

Inspection of a good school: Finberry Primary School

Avocet Way, Finberry, Ashford, Kent TN25 7GS

Inspection dates:

23 and 24 January 2024

Outcome

Finberry Primary School continues to be a good school.

The head of school is Siobhan Risley. This school is part of the Stour 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, Rachael Howell, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Fiona Trigwell. There is also an executive headteacher, Helen Evemy, who is responsible for this school and one other.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils become confident and independent learners at this aspirational school. They behave well and show great kindness to one another. Pupils work hard to embrace the school's values such as perseverance, respect, opportunity, unity and diversity. Pupils show this through their high levels of concentration, excellent conduct and mature discussions of sensitive issues. Pupils enjoy coming to school and know that staff work hard to keep them safe.

Pupils enjoy learning. They listen attentively in lessons and share their ideas confidently with their peers. Classrooms are purposeful environments and all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), work hard to produce high-quality work.

Pupils enrich their learning with a wide range of activities that are carefully planned to enhance the curriculum. They learn about democracy through voting for the wide range of school leadership roles and their visit to the Houses of Parliament. Pupils develop a practical understanding of diversity through the wide range of artists, writers and historical figures that they learn about. Several pupils become cultural and language leaders. They share traditions and experiences from the diverse range of cultures in the school.

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

The school has carefully embedded a broad and well-designed curriculum. This begins in Nursery Year and is carefully sequenced to help pupils build the skills and knowledge that

they need to prepare them for their next steps. However, in computing, teachers do not always support pupils in remembering what they have previously learned, so that they can fully understand new learning.

Teachers systematically check pupils' understanding through the thoughtful use of questions or more formal assessments. They use this to plan activities to support pupils in keeping up and achieving well. In Reception Year, staff use their knowledge of pupils to plan engaging activities that are matched accurately to pupils' needs.

Teachers are well trained and have strong subject knowledge. They explain learning clearly and plan exciting activities that support pupils in developing their skills and knowledge in small steps. Disadvantaged pupils, including those with SEND, are well supported. Teachers plan a range of well-considered adaptations and activities to enable pupils with SEND to learn alongside their peers. Pre-learning activities provide pupils with important knowledge. The use of video reminders of important learning points quickly refocuses pupils when they require additional support. In Reception, all staff use high-quality questioning and communication to guide pupils skilfully and ensure that they meet challenging personal milestones.

Pupils, including those with SEND, achieve well. They learn to use a wide range of technical language accurately and confidently. Pupils carefully consider their own learning and can explain how they solve problems and technical tasks. They achieve well in national tests. The school prioritises reading. It has introduced a well-designed scheme to teach phonics. Staff demonstrate sounds and strategies accurately and this supports pupils in becoming fluent and confident readers. Pupils are enthusiastic readers and are excited to win new books in the school's reading rewards system.

Pupils have positive attitudes to learning. They concentrate well and respond quickly to the well-established routines in classes. Pupils are considerate and caring. They support each other thoughtfully and work diligently in pairs and small groups. The school has shown a relentless commitment to improving attendance for all pupils. Leaders monitor pupils' attendance and punctuality carefully and use this information to offer a wide range of support to pupils and families. Pupils attend frequently and show high levels of punctuality.

The school has prioritised pupils' personal development. It enhances the curriculum through regular trips matched carefully to what pupils are learning. These include visits to local historical sites or theatres. Pupils learn important knowledge through the well-sequenced 'life skills' curriculum, including essential information such as using bus timetables or tying a tie in readiness for their next steps. Pupils have opportunities to develop a range of skills and talents through school clubs and activities. All pupils have opportunities such as performing ballet to parents or representing the school in a range of sports.

Staff enjoy working at Finberry. They feel well supported by their colleagues, leaders and governors. Staff benefit from a broad range of training offered by the trust and the expertise of trust subject leaders. Governors and the trust hold leaders to account effectively. Parents feel that pupils are safe and receive high levels of support.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In computing, teachers do not support pupils in consistently making clear connections to their current learning in a way that deepens their understanding. This limits some pupils' learning. Leaders should ensure that teachers are supported in helping pupils to remember prior learning so that pupils can achieve their best across all subjects.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. 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 good on 26 and 27 September 2018.

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	141881
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10296411
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	379
Appropriate authority	Board of Directors
Chair	Fiona Trigwell
Executive Headteacher	Helen Evemy
Website	www.finberryprimaryschool.org.uk
Dates of previous inspection	26 to 27 September 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Stour Academy Trust. It was opened in September 2015, and moved to its current site in September 2017.
- The school manages a specialist resource provision for pupils with autism spectrum disorder. There are a total of eight pupils who are taught in mainstream classes and within the provision.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.
- The school provides breakfast and after-school clubs for pupils.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of the school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The lead inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- The inspection team met with the executive headteacher and head of school, as well as with other leaders and staff. The lead inspector also met with the CEO of the Stour Academy trust and the chair of the board of directors.
- The lead inspector carried out deep dives in the following subjects: reading, mathematics and computing. For each deep dive, the inspector held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector 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.

Inspection team

Gavin Thomas, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
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