

Inspection of a good school: Church Langley Community Primary School

Church Langley Way, Church Langley, Harlow, Essex, CM17 9TH

Inspection dates:

24 and 25 January 2024

Outcome

Church Langley Community Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

The school is a friendly and welcoming community. Pupils speak proudly about their learning. They like talking to visitors and explaining their work. In all year groups, pupils enjoy the stories they share with their teachers.

Behaviour is good. Pupils understand and apply the 'golden rules' they are taught. As a result, classrooms are calm and interesting places to learn. The positive relationships between teachers and pupils are a strong feature of daily life in the school. Therefore, pupils are safe and happy.

Pupils achieve well overall, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). However, they do not make as much progress with their writing as they do in reading and mathematics.

Pupils look out for each other. Older pupils support younger children sensitively in roles such as play leaders and reading ambassadors. Some ambassadors promote healthy lifestyles and exercise at break and lunchtimes. Trips, for example, to the National Gallery, bring pupils' learning to life. Visitors from the Royal Opera House recently introduced pupils to new ideas in dance and music. The wide range of after-school clubs is popular and well attended. The 'This girl can' club is especially proud of the group's rugby and football skills.

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

The ambitious curriculum is typically well-planned and sequenced. It is carefully designed to give pupils a wide range of interesting experiences. Curriculum content is reviewed regularly. Leaders check that the provision meets pupils' needs from the early years to the end of Year 6. Pupils have regular opportunities to practise, using their knowledge as they apply previous learning to new ideas.

The revised curriculum is effective overall. However, it is less established in a few subjects. New subject leaders are checking the impact of curriculum changes to ensure that all pupils continue to achieve well. In some cases, where curriculum quality is still under review, activities are not always matched to the intended learning precisely. This means that, occasionally, pupils do not learn as much as they could.

Reading is at the heart of the curriculum. In the Reception class, children enjoy matching letters to sounds. This helps them to read unfamiliar words confidently. Older pupils who have fallen behind in reading catch up quickly. The school promotes a love of reading widely, including through the impressive pupil ambassadors.

Pupils make strong progress in reading and mathematics. However, they do not achieve as consistently well in their writing. Leaders have acted to raise expectations of the way that writing is taught across the curriculum. Strategies include a more consistent focus on spelling and vocabulary across subjects. Signs of improvement suggest that some of these strategies are working, but they are still at an early stage.

In most subjects, pupils explain confidently how new learning helps them to build on what they already know. Teachers check regularly to identify any gaps in pupils' understanding. They act quickly to address misconceptions, so that new learning builds on secure foundations of knowledge and skills. In mathematics, pupils enjoy improving their mathematical speed and fluency. They respond enthusiastically to problems linked to previous learning. Physical education (PE) and art are popular subjects. Pupils are keen to showcase their emerging skills. Overall, pupils with SEND achieve well in this inclusive school environment. Class teachers work closely with other adults to ensure pupils are supported effectively.

Pupils respond well to teachers' high expectations of good behaviour. In the early years, children settle into routines quickly. They learn to share and take turns together. Pupils enjoy the school's close-knit community. They learn how to stay safe and to make safe choices, including when playing games online. From the early years, children are encouraged to say 'no' and to speak out if something does not feel right. Close working with families ensures that pupils' attendance continues to improve.

Pupils' wider development is promoted well. They understand the principles of democracy and respect for others. The extensive range of pupil responsibilities are sought after and valued. The school council plays an active role in representing the views of their peers. Ideas from this group resulted in recent events, such as the multi-cultural week and new after-school clubs.

Staff feel that they are listened to. They value the leadership's 'open door' policy and the attention given to the whole school's wellbeing. Leaders are considerate of staff workload. They act quickly to resolve any concerns. Governors fulfil their statutory responsibilities. They understand their duty to keep pupils safe. Together with school leaders, they are committed to supporting the school's ongoing success, including continuing to improve communication with parents.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Curriculum changes to improve pupils' writing are still at an early stage. These changes, for example, to improve the consistency of expectations in the presentation of work, pupils' spelling and the focus on vocabulary across subjects are still embedding. As a result, pupils do not always make as much progress in their writing as they do in reading and mathematics. The school should expedite the implementation of changes to how writing is taught across the curriculum, so that all pupils achieve consistently well.
- In a few subjects, curriculum leaders are new. They are still honing their skills to evaluate what is working well and what needs to change in their areas of responsibility. That is why, in some cases, there is a mismatch between the activities set and the intended learning content. This occasionally slows pupils' progress. The school should ensure that new leaders have any additional training they need to help them to pinpoint any necessary improvements, so that the quality of provision continues to improve.

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 second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in May 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	131209
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	10295019
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	5 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	489
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Maria Bedford
Headteacher	Stacey Ward
Website	www.churchlangley.essex.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	16 May 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school does not use alternative provision.
- There have been some recent changes to middle leadership in the school.

Information about this inspection

- 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. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in the evaluation of the school.
- The inspector conducted deep dives in the following subjects: Early reading, mathematics and geography. To complete each deep dive, she discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, and spoke with teachers. She also spoke with pupils about their learning and looked at samples of their work.
- A wider sample of curriculum plans were considered beyond the deep dives, including those in art and PE.

- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector looked at safeguarding policies, the school's record of pre-employment checks on new staff and a sample of child protection files. The inspector 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.
- The inspector spoke with a group of governors, including the chair of governors, who is also the safeguarding governor.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, who is also the special educational needs coordinator. The inspector held further meetings with other leaders, school staff and groups of pupils.
- A range of documents were checked, including behaviour logs, attendance records, minutes of governors' meetings, school improvement plans and school policies.
- The inspector also spoke with a local authority representative on the telephone.
- There were 94 responses to the on-line questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View, which were considered alongside 50 free-text responses from parents.
- The inspector also took account of 51 responses to Ofsted's questionnaire for school staff. There were 274 responses to Ofsted's questionnaire for school pupils.

Inspection team

Christine Dick, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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