

Inspection of Great Easton Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Great Easton, Snow Hill, Dunmow, Essex CM6 2DR

Inspection dates: 13 and 14 March 2024

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils thrive in school. They demonstrate the school's core value of kindness in lessons and during social times. Pupils learn to respect each other's differences. This is particularly beneficial for the many pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) who arrive after traumatic experiences in education. These pupils heal, develop self-worth and learn the curriculum well.

Pupils learn how to maintain positive mental and physical health exceptionally well. They discuss their emotions articulately. Using the different strategies learned at school, pupils manage negative feelings very well. Pupils also show remarkable sensitivity towards the needs of others. As a result, pupils feel safe to try new things without fear of embarrassment.

Pupils enjoy learning. They enthusiastically talk about their studies. In lessons, they work hard and aim for the school's high expectations of achievement. They remember much of what they study. From their start in early years, pupils become confident in speaking, reading and writing. Pupils' learning is enhanced by the well-thought-out programme of enrichment activities. Similarly, nearly all pupils take part in one of the many school clubs.

Pupils feel safe at school and know what to do if concerns arise.

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

Leaders and staff provide high-quality education for pupils, including for children in the early years. In line with their ongoing commitment to providing the best for pupils, leaders and staff are currently redesigning elements of the curriculum. Through their reviews of the curriculum, they recognise that some content within the curriculum needs refining to support pupils to remember more. Similarly, there are some subjects where leaders need to be clearer about exactly what teachers must ensure pupils, and children in the early years, learn. As a result, pupils occasionally forget what has been taught. Leaders' work is having the desired effect in many subjects, but there is more work to do.

Teachers have secure subject knowledge and understand how best to teach it. They routinely check what pupils remember and understand. When pupils forget or misunderstand something, teachers typically act swiftly to provide support, so pupils do not fall behind.

Pupils enjoy reading and value the well-stocked collection of books at the school. Pupils develop wide reading interests in a range of genres, including fiction and non-fiction. Since the previous inspection, the school has fully embedded a new reading scheme. In Reception and key stage 1, staff deliver the new scheme effectively, so pupils learn the basics of early reading. Pupils who find reading difficult are well supported to learn what they need to read fluently.

Teachers provide very effective support for pupils with SEND. The school precisely identifies these pupils' needs. Leaders work with external specialists and do careful research to develop well-considered guidance for staff. Staff use the school's guidance to adapt learning activities successfully. As a result, pupils with SEND learn what they need.

Pupils know that learning is important and are typically focused during lessons. Unacceptable behaviour rarely happens at school. The school's restorative approach to managing unacceptable behaviour is well understood and adhered to by staff and pupils. When pupils make mistakes, they readily accept responsibility for them and willingly try to improve the situation. In the early years, staff have in place strong transition arrangements and clear routines at school. These ensure that children quickly learn, and live up to, the school's expectations.

The school's exceptional provision for personal development ensures that pupils are ready for their next steps in education and for life in contemporary Britain. Pupils are curious about the many lifestyles and beliefs in society. They thoughtfully reflect on themselves as learners and human beings in the world. Pupils speak sensitively and develop informed positions about their views regarding local, national and international issues. They capably and enthusiastically take on the school's many positions of leadership. Pupils understand their responsibilities as members of a democratic society. They demonstrate the willingness to meet leaders' aim for pupils to 'change the world' in positive ways.

Parents and staff are very proud of their school. They appreciate leaders' drive towards excellence.

Governors are well informed about the quality of the school's provision. They hold leaders accountable for their work by using information from external specialists, leaders' reports and governors' own checks on the school effectively.

Leaders and governors are fully committed to ensuring that staff have a reasonable workload. Staff cherish their close working relationships and the strong teamwork at the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school's curriculum has areas where leaders and staff have not organised well enough the sequence of knowledge and skills to be taught. There are also areas that need greater clarification about the exact knowledge pupils, and children in the early years, should learn. As a result, pupils occasionally forget key

knowledge. The school needs to continue its work refining curriculum plans so that pupils remember in the long term what has been taught.

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	115177
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	10294947
Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	142
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chairs of governing body	Olivia Smith and Alison Skinner
Headteacher	Claire Jackman
Website	www.greateastonprimary.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	15 and 16 November 2022, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- This is a school with a Christian ethos within the Diocese of Chelmsford. The school received its most recent section 48 Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools in February 2023 and will be reinspected approximately five years from then. The report can be found on the school's website.
- This school does not use alternative providers.
- The school runs its own before- and after-school 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.
- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors spoke with the governors, the headteacher, members of the senior leadership team, subject leaders, teachers, members of support staff and pupils.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: history, mathematics, physical education and reading. For each deep dive, inspectors 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.
- Inspectors also discussed the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons and looked at samples of pupils' work in some other subjects.
- 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 observed the behaviour of pupils in lessons and during social time.
- Inspectors looked at relevant documents and held discussions with leaders, staff and pupils about the provision for pupils' personal development.
- Inspectors considered the responses of 26 staff, 30 pupils and 60 parents to Ofsted's online surveys.

Inspection team

Al Mistrano, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Mike Wade

Ofsted Inspector

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