

Inspection of Rayleigh Primary School

Love Lane, Rayleigh, Essex SS6 7DD

Inspection dates: 26 to 27 March 2024

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Outstanding
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

The headteacher of this school is Jennifer Milner. This school is part of Schools For Every Child 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, Lee Faris and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Paula Whittle.

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

What is it like to attend this school?

The school motto, 'Respect ourselves, each other and the future' reverberates throughout Rayleigh Primary School. This is because teachers have high expectations about pupils' learning and behaviour. Pupils are kind. They care for others. They gain much important knowledge and achieve highly. Pupils are safe because teachers vigilantly ensure pupils' welfare. Pupils know there is always an adult to turn to for help.

Children from the Nursery develop highly positive behaviours. In Reception children are eager to learn and behave exceptionally well. They are resilient and do not give up. Pupils listen carefully and respond enthusiastically to their teachers' questions. They share their ideas and help each other to learn. Pupils are happy. They enjoy learning and attend well.

Pupils build new skills and knowledge through a range of extra-curricular activities. Pupils compete regionally, they perform regularly and learn to play musical instruments. Pupils know their rights and gain tremendous responsibilities. They have considerable opportunities to develop leadership skills. School counsellors discuss with leaders how to improve areas of school life. Eco counsellors raise awareness of environmental issues among their friends. These experiences equip pupils well for the future.

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

Leaders have constructed a broad and ambitious curriculum. In most areas of the curriculum, leaders have precisely identified the knowledge pupils learn. This knowledge builds well on pupils' prior learning. Teachers present knowledge clearly. They systematically check how well pupils are learning. They sensitively support pupils when they make a mistake or misunderstand. In mathematics, Reception age children quickly grasp an understanding of number. Older pupils explain their calculations with clarity. They independently apply their mathematical knowledge to real life problems. Outcomes at key stage 2 in mathematics are some of the highest in the country.

Learning to read and building language is at the core of the curriculum. This begins in the Nursery. Teachers adopt a highly consistent approach to the teaching of reading. As a result, children in Reception gain sounds with ease. They blend sounds without support. They apply their knowledge of phonics to write new words and sentences with confidence. They gain a rich vocabulary. Older children read with fluency and begin to write at length. Teachers swiftly support pupils who fall behind with their reading so they catch up. Pupils appreciate reading a diverse range of books. This helps them grasp an understanding of mature themes such as slavery, the fight for equal rights and immigration. Pupils apply this knowledge to write in different styles with accurate grammar, spelling and punctuation. Outcomes in reading and writing at key stage 2 are also exceptionally high.

Most areas of the curriculum link logically to other areas of the curriculum. For example, in Year 5 in science, pupils grasp a thorough understanding of the life cycle. They build on this to learn about how their bodies will change as they grow up. They find out about habitats in African countries. They use this knowledge to write imaginative stories about animals native to Africa. They research pioneering scientists such as Jane Goodall. This fuels their own aspirations.

In some areas of the curriculum, the knowledge pupils learn does not build precisely on prior learning. As a result of this, some pupils do not learn as well as they could. In light of this, leaders continue to refine the curriculum.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) achieve well. Leaders identify with precision pupils in need of support. Leaders equip teachers with the strategies and guidance to adapt the curriculum for pupils with SEND.

Provision for pupils' personal development instils positive values. Pupils are open-minded and embrace difference. They visit places of worship for a variety of world religions. They foster positive relationships which are founded on trust and respect. They know which behaviours hurt others and themselves. Leaders have established a culture of celebration. Teachers reward 'altruistic', 'pioneering' and 'ethical' actions. Pupils contribute to fund raising for a range of local and global causes.

After three headteachers in three years, the school has experienced some instability. Leaders, governors and the trust have a clear vision for the school. Teachers share this vision. They fully understand leaders' ambitious expectations. Teachers receive the training and wellbeing support to achieve them. Leaders know they still have to win over the hearts and minds of a significant minority of parents. Leaders' unwavering commitment to nurturing highly knowledgeable, global citizens puts them in good stead to do this.

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 minority of curriculum areas, some pupils do not gain as much knowledge as they could. This is because the school has not precisely identified the knowledge they want some pupils to learn. Some content does not link clearly to what pupils have learned before. The school must refine these areas of the curriculum further to ensure knowledge is clearly prescribed and builds on what pupils have learned before.

How can I feed back my views?

You can 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	139543
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	10242271
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	451
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Paula Whittle
CEO of the trust	Lee Faris
Headteacher	Jennifer Milner
Website	www.rayleighprimary.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Schools For Every Child multi-academy trust
- The headteacher has been in post since January 2024

Information about this inspection

The inspector(s) carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- 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.
- The inspectors met with the CEO, chair of trust, chair of governors, other governors and trustees, the headteacher, other leaders, subject leaders, teachers and support staff. The inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics, science, geography and design and technology. These included discussions with subject leaders, visits to lessons, meetings with staff and pupils, scrutiny of pupils' work and

a review of any curriculum documentation. They also scrutinised other curriculum areas and pupils' work.

- 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.
- The inspectors considered the views of pupils, staff and parents. There were 28 responses to Ofsted's staff survey. There were 99 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View. The inspectors considered 99 free-text responses from parents. Inspectors also spoke to parents.

Inspection team

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His Majesty's Inspector

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