

# Inspection of a good school: Heathlands Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School, West Bergholt

New Church Road, West Bergholt, Colchester, Essex CO6 3JF

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Inspection dates:

23 and 24 April 2024

## Outcome

Heathlands Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School, West Bergholt continues to be a good school.

## What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are overwhelmingly happy here. They enjoy attending school each day. The caring culture underpins all aspects of school life. Parents value the nurturing and supportive nature of the school. They feel part of a welcoming community.

Pupils are confident, polite and they behave well. They understand the boundaries that the school has put in place for them. Pupils and staff do not tolerate bullying or discrimination. Pupils are clear that people from all backgrounds are welcome in their school. Pupils feel safe and know that trusted adults will help them.

Pupils respond well to the high expectations that the school has for them. This includes pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The school's vision of 'Helping everyone shine their light' underpins the school's curriculum.

Pupils have wide and varied learning opportunities beyond the curriculum. Pupils attend a range of engaging clubs. These include French, cheerleading and sporting clubs. The overwhelming majority of pupils take part in extra-curricular activities regularly and enjoy representing the school. Pupils relish the chance to take on roles of responsibilities, such as school captains.

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

The school has developed a curriculum that meets the needs of all pupils. It starts in the early years and develops in a logical, sequential manner. In the majority of subjects, pupils build on their prior learning, enabling them to know more and remember more. However, in a few subjects, the precise knowledge that pupils should learn is not as clear. This means that teachers do not always plan learning that builds pupils' knowledge as effectively over time or check if pupils remember what they have learned.

Teachers usually skilfully adapt work so that different groups of pupils learn the key knowledge and acquire the core skills required. Occasionally, teachers do not always adapt activities quickly enough to make sure that all groups of pupils learn as well as they could. Consequently, pupils sometimes find the work too easy or too hard.

The development of a love of reading is a key priority for the school. Pupils visit the school library weekly to choose books to enjoy at home. The school's programme for phonics is effective. As pupils learn more sounds, they read with increasing confidence. Children begin phonics as soon as they start in Reception. The books that pupils read match the sounds that they know. This helps pupils to practise and apply their phonics knowledge. Staff provide effective support for pupils who are not keeping pace with the programme. These pupils get the support they need to catch up quickly.

Children get off to a strong start in Reception. The early years curriculum is organised logically in all areas of learning. Communication and language are prioritised. Key vocabulary is deliberately identified. Staff choose activities carefully to capture children's interest. Children are confident to access their learning independently.

Pupils with SEND receive effective support. The school quickly identifies their needs and addresses them. Adaptations to the curriculum and environment help pupils access all learning alongside their peers. They become confident, successful, independent learners. Pupils with SEND participate in all aspects of school life.

Pupils attend school regularly. The school has made sure that attendance is a high priority for all groups of pupils. It has carefully analysed attendance data to quickly spot any concerns and act on these swiftly.

Pupils' personal development is a priority. Pupils have a secure understanding of what it means to be healthy, both physically and mentally. There is a number of extra-curricular clubs that capture pupils' interests. Educational visits and experiences are purposeful and relate to the curriculum in a meaningful way.

Staff are proud to work at the school. They value the professional development and the well-being support they receive. Governors are skilled. They have strong knowledge of the school, which is underpinned by appropriate training. They evaluate a range of information from a range of sources to build a strong picture of what the school is doing well and the next steps that are needed.

## **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 small number of subjects, the precise sequence of knowledge that pupils should learn and remember is unclear. This does not help teachers to plan learning that emphasises the important subject knowledge that pupils should know. Consequently, pupils do not always build on previous knowledge that will enable them to know more and remember more over time. The school should make sure that the essential knowledge that pupils need to know and remember in these subjects is clear and precisely set out so that pupils achieve as well as they can.
- In some subjects, teachers do not adapt activities or the curriculum well enough to build effectively on what pupils have learned previously. Where this is the case, pupils do not learn with as much success and confidence as they do in other subjects. They sometimes find work too hard or too easy. The school should ensure that teachers adapt the curriculum and activities so that pupils learn equally well in 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 20 and 21 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	115083
<b>Local authority</b>	Essex
<b>Inspection number</b>	10323621
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	416
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Carlene Thompson
<b>Headteacher</b>	Joseph Fielder
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.heathlands.essex.sch.uk">www.heathlands.essex.sch.uk</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	20 and 21 September 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- This is a school with a Christian ethos within the Diocese of Chelmsford. The school received its most recent Section 48 inspection in January 2019 and will be reinspected approximately five years from this date.

## 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 their evaluation of the school.
- During the inspection, the inspector carried out deep dives into these subjects: early reading, mathematics and history. 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, listened to pupils read to a familiar adult and looked at

samples of pupils' work. The inspector also discussed the curriculum in some other subjects.

- The inspector held meetings with the headteacher, other senior leaders including the special educational needs coordinator, members of staff and pupils.
- The inspector met with the chair of the governing body and other members of the local governing body.
- The inspector met with a representative from the local authority.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour during lessons, around the school and at break and lunchtimes.
- 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.
- The inspector reviewed a wide range of documents, including the school's self-evaluation and improvement plans and information on the school's website.
- The inspector considered responses to Ofsted Parent View, including parent free-text responses. The inspector also took account of responses to Ofsted's staff survey.

## **Inspection team**

Joseph Figg, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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