

Inspection of Boxford Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Stone Street Road, Boxford, Sudbury, Suffolk CO10 5NP

Inspection dates:	1 and 2 October 2024
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Outstanding

Until November 2020, the school was exempt from routine inspection because it was judged as outstanding for overall effectiveness at its previous inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. The school has not been inspected under section 5 of the Act since April 2012. Since September 2024, schools have not been awarded an overall effectiveness grade.

What is it like to attend this school?

This school has a culture of kindness and respect. Pupils receive excellent support with their well-being. This is especially so for vulnerable pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The school compassionately helps families where needed. Pupils are able to support their peers because their own emotional needs are deeply met. For example, Year 6 pupils started a high-quality 'well-being team'. As a result of this ethos, pupils are safe and happy.

Behaviour is orderly. After breaktimes, pupils return calmly to lessons. In class, they focus and work hard. Pupils are polite and friendly. They open doors to adults and tidy up after themselves. Children in early years respond well to clear routines. Bullying is rare. Any incidents of unkindness get speedily resolved.

Pupils learn an ambitious curriculum. They achieve well.

There is an exceptionally wide and well-planned set of opportunities. Pupils, including those with SEND, lead many of these themselves, such as a well-attended computing club. Pupils learn a lot from trips. For instance, they explain in detail how visiting Colchester Castle deepens their knowledge of Roman history. Pupils initiate whole-school charity work. They live and breathe the school's motto of 'living life in all its fullness'.

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

The school's current leadership has rapidly improved provision. This is most evident in areas where the school has focused most, such as attendance and personal development. In a few aspects of the curriculum, improvements are still not fully embedded.

The school recently implemented a new curriculum. This identifies the key components pupils need to succeed. Starting in early years, content builds incrementally on prior learning. Therefore, pupils develop their knowledge and apply it well. For example, Year 4 pupils define prepositions, and then use them skilfully in their stories.

The school mostly delivers the curriculum successfully. Staff are well trained and have the subject knowledge they need. Teachers explain and model new content clearly. They check thoroughly that pupils understand the learning. In most cases, pupils develop detailed knowledge. For instance, confident recall of mathematical vocabulary supports them in solving complex calculations. Pupils produce high-quality work, such as some beautiful watercolours in art. While this is mostly the case, occasionally the school uses activities that do not help pupils learn the intended knowledge. Where this happens, pupils make less progress.

The school has improved the phonics provision. This helps pupils remember and blend their sounds well. They use this knowledge to form well-crafted handwriting. Particularly in Reception and Year 1, pupils quickly become confident readers. A few pupils in older year groups, including some with SEND, have gaps in their reading knowledge. To address

this, the school has put in place expert interventions. As a result, these pupils are reading with increasing fluency.

Pupils with SEND are a high priority. The school identifies their needs early and accurately. Teachers carefully adapt learning where needed. Most pupils with SEND are doing well. The school has identified that some pupils with SEND need more precise extra support. It has introduced a range of important out-of-class interventions. Sometimes, these interventions are not planned as effectively as they could be. This means that pupils may miss key learning in lessons. In these cases, the interventions close one gap but create another.

Children get off to a flying start in early years. Staff skilfully help their learning through play. For instance, adults teach turn-taking and jumping techniques in hopscotch. This means children are ready for their next stage.

The behaviour policy is well considered and communicated effectively. For example, the school uses praise adeptly to teach pupils the desired conduct. Pupils understand and respond well to this. Attendance has improved significantly. This is due to the high levels of pastoral and well-being support the school provides to pupils and families.

The personal development provision is rich and coherent. This builds deep understanding of important content, such as the risks of smoking and alcohol. Pupils recall this information excellently. Their knowledge is further enhanced by initiatives like the 'No Outsider' assemblies. For example, after a session on Afghan refugees, Year 5 pupils talked with real depth and maturity about women's rights. This exemplary programme fosters active citizenship. As a result, pupils are more than ready for their next steps.

Governors fulfil their roles very well. They provide frequent and effective support to the school, offering sharper scrutiny where needed. Together, governors and leaders have created a strong team ethic within the school. This encourages staff to take the initiative in improving provision.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some areas of the curriculum, the school uses activities that do not help pupils to learn the intended knowledge successfully. This means pupils sometimes do not build up what they know as well as they might. The school should provide staff with the guidance and support they need to deliver the curriculum with consistent effectiveness.
- Some pupils with SEND receive interventions for areas such as reading and well-being, but these interventions sometimes cause them to miss key classroom learning. As a

result, new gaps in their learning can develop. The school needs to ensure interventions are planned in a way that supports pupils without causing them to miss important learning, preventing any further gaps in their knowledge.

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	124691
Local authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	10323684
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	174
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Emma Hollock
Headteacher	Emma Lea
Website	www.boxford-suffolk.secure-dbprimary.com/suffolk/primary/boxford
Date of previous inspection	24 April 2012, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school has had five different headteachers since the previous inspection. The current headteacher was appointed in January 2022.
- The chair of governors was elected in January 2023.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- The school has a Christian character. It is part of the Diocese of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich. The school was last inspected under section 48 of the Education Act in June 2017. It is due another Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools inspection shortly.
- There is a separate nursery provider, Sunflowers Childcare, on the same site.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth form

provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024 will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school’s education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed any impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, the assistant headteacher, staff, and pupils. As part of evaluating governance, the lead inspector met with the chair and vice chair of governors. Inspectors held meetings by phone, with representatives from the local authority and the diocese.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, art and physical education. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, met with teachers, met with some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils’ work. In early reading this took the form of listening to pupils read to a familiar adult.
- 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 reviewed a wide range of documents, including curriculum plans, school development plans, policies and documentation for behaviour and attendance.
- Inspectors considered responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, and free-text comments submitted by parents during the inspection. They considered the responses to Ofsted’s questionnaire for staff. There were no responses to Ofsted’s questionnaire for pupils. To mitigate this, inspectors spoke with large numbers of pupils during the inspection.

Inspection team

Charlie Fordham, lead inspector

His Majesty’s Inspector

Lynn Ayling

Ofsted Inspector

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