

Inspection of Great Dunmow Primary School

Walnut Walk, Woodlands Park Drive, Great Dunmow, Essex CM6 1ZR

Inspection dates:	5 and 6 November 2024
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils flourish at this happy inclusive school. They are incredibly proud of their school. Pupils value that they have friends who are kind and staff that care for them. Pupils appreciate how staff listen and quickly resolve any worries they may have.

Pupils' behaviour is exemplary in classrooms and during social times. Pupils delight in receiving a special school badge for 'doing the right thing'. They enjoy celebrating the achievements of their classmates. Pupils work well together across the school. This makes classrooms purposeful places to learn.

Pupils celebrate faiths and cultures that may be different from their own. For example, they discussed the festival of Diwali with respect because their teachers have taught them the importance of learning about others.

The school provides a range of educational experiences to enrich the curriculum. There are a wide range of clubs here, such as dodgeball, gardening and cookery club. These clubs are very well attended. Pupils take part in a high number of sporting competitions with success. These opportunities support pupils to develop resilience.

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

Reading is a priority here. Pupils are eager to talk about their favourite authors. Staff read aloud to pupils regularly and authors visit the school to share books with pupils. These experiences develop a love for reading.

Staff have received effective training to teach reading. There is a consistent approach to the teaching of reading across classes. The school wants pupils to develop confidence in reading. Therefore, children begin to learn phonics as soon as they join the Reception Year. The school is successful in ensuring that pupils recall sounds well. Pupils practise reading daily. They develop reading fluency by reading books with letters and sounds they know. This means that pupils read with enthusiasm and access reading well, across the curriculum. Those pupils at risk of falling behind are quickly given help to keep up.

The school has in place an ambitious curriculum. The school has identified the key content for pupils to learn from Reception to Year 6. Teachers present this content in a logical order. For example, in the Reception Year, children confidently recognise small amounts of objects without counting. This is because the school has taught them what each number is made up of.

Teachers have good subject knowledge. They explain new concepts clearly and correct misconceptions promptly. For example, in history, Year 4 pupils explained how artefacts help them to understand the past. This is because teachers have taught them about the reliability of different historical sources.

The school identifies pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) as early as possible. Teaching staff are well trained. They effectively make adaptations to teaching so these pupils can achieve well.

Pupils achieve highly in mathematics and English. Over time, high pupil outcomes in the national assessments at the end of Year 6 reflect this. However, pupils' achievement in some wider curriculum subjects is not as high. This is because the checking of what pupils know and remember is not always effective. This means staff cannot pick up on mistakes and misconceptions as quickly as they might.

The school has extremely high expectations of pupils. Pupils' attitudes to their learning are excellent. This starts from the Reception Year, where children learn to follow routines and to share. Learning is not interrupted by any silly behaviour.

The programme for personal development is exceptional. Pupils visit the Houses of Parliament and magistrates visit the school to discuss the importance of rules. These experiences help pupils to understand the values of honesty and respect. Pupils learn about consent and healthy relationships in an age-appropriate manner.

The school has identified significant individuals that pupils will learn about. Through assemblies, carefully chosen visitors share their journey of being different. This helps pupils to appreciate the uniqueness of everyone.

The school provides opportunities for pupils to take on roles of responsibility. Pupils in Year 6 are 'buddied' with children in the Reception Year. This helps children to settle into school quickly. Pupils learn to look after their environment. Eco-warriors show responsibility by reminding staff of the importance of conserving energy. Pupils plant seeds to grow vegetables. They look after, harvest, and cook them. These opportunities enable pupils to show the school's values of respect and effort.

Governors have an accurate understanding of the school. They have appropriate systems in place to check the effectiveness of the school. Staff are extremely proud to work here. They value the initiatives to support their well-being and manage their workload.

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 few subjects, the school's checks on how well pupils have learned the curriculum are not fully effective. This means that some pupils have gaps in their learning which

staff have not addressed. The school needs to strengthen this aspect of its work so that pupils achieve highly across the breadth of the curriculum.

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	115298
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	10345158
Type of school	Primary
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	422
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Christine Hemming
Headteacher	Kevin Watts
Website	www.greatdunmowprimary.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	13 and 14 June 2023, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school runs a breakfast and after-school club daily.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.
- The school is part of the Dunmow Excellence in Education Partnership consisting of nine primary schools.

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.
- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspectors held meetings with the senior leadership team to discuss school development. In addition, they met with subject leaders, groups of staff and pupils.
- An inspector met with representatives of the local governing board and with a representative from the local authority.
- 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 carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, science and geography. 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 in some other subjects.
- The lead inspector listened to pupils in Years 1, 2 and 3 read to a familiar adult.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school site.
- Inspectors considered the responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View. They also took into consideration Ofsted's online staff and pupil surveys.

Inspection team

Deborah Walters, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Craige Brown

Ofsted Inspector

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