

Inspection of Clyst St Mary Primary School

Clyst St Mary, Exeter, Devon EX5 1BG

Inspection dates:	24 and 25 September 2024
The quality of education	Requires improvement
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Clyst St Mary Primary School is a warm and friendly school at the heart of the community. Staff and pupils have relationships built on trust and mutual respect. Pupils say that if they have any concerns, they know staff will support them. As a result, pupils feel safe.

The school has high expectations for pupil's achievements. However, some aspects of the curriculum are not implemented effectively enough. This means many pupils are not prepared for the next stage of their education as well as they should.

Pupils are proud of their school. Older pupils show kindness and support to the younger pupils. Pupils contribute positively to the local and wider community. For example, pupils have raised money through sponsored events for new football goals as well as charities, such as Children in Need.

Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), are included fully in all aspects of school life. Pupils talk positively about the range of after-school clubs and extra-curricular activities available. Residential at outdoor education centres help to build pupils' independence and confidence. Pupils have a strong understanding of what it takes to be physically and mentally healthy. They also learn how to stay safe online.

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

The school has a curriculum that matches the breath and ambition of the national curriculum. The school has determined the important knowledge that pupils should acquire and the order in which teachers should introduce it. Pupils with SEND learn the same curriculum as their peers. However, teachers do not effectively check what pupils understand. This means that some learning activities do not match what pupils know and can do. Sometimes, activities for pupils with high prior attainment and for some pupils with SEND lack ambition. As a result, pupils do not achieve as well as they could.

The school has recently strengthened the mathematics curriculum. However, inconsistencies remain in the way mathematics is implemented. The teaching of mathematics lacks precision and learning activities are not routinely matched to the needs of the pupils. Furthermore, misconceptions are not swiftly addressed. Therefore, some pupils move on to new learning with continuing gaps in their knowledge. This weakness is reflected in the results of national tests at the end of key stage 2.

School leaders have ensured reading is at the heart of the school's curriculum. Learning to read begins as soon as children start school in Reception. Staff select books that help pupils to learn about diversity and different groups in society. This helps pupils broaden their views of the wider world. Most pupils enjoy reading and being read to by their teachers. However, some of the weakest readers do not have sufficient support. This affects their understanding and they do not progress as well as they should.

The Reception class is a warm and caring environment. Children are keen to join in with the learning activities that develop different skills. For example, children use a range of craft materials to develop their fine motor skills. The curriculum is designed to help develop children's communication and language. For example, children carefully draw self-portraits. This promotes a conversation led by the teacher to celebrate each other's differences.

The programme for pupils' personal development is a strength of the school. Pupils say the school council provides them with a voice in the school. They are proud of the responsibilities they have, such as being buddies to the younger children and as librarians. Pupils have a strong understanding of fundamental British values. They learn about different faiths and cultures. This helps pupils to understand the importance of tolerance and equality of opportunity.

School leaders have ensured attendance remains a priority. There are robust systems in place when pupils do not attend school. As a result, pupils attend well. Pupils generally show calm and focused behaviour. The times when learning activities are not well matched to what pupils are able to do can lead to a small minority of pupils becoming distracted in lessons.

Staff are proud to work at the school. Teachers appreciate the support they receive from school leaders. They know that consideration is given to workload and well-being. Governors are committed to supporting the school and the staff. They understand their role in maintaining effective oversight of statutory processes, including safeguarding. However, those responsible for governance do not have an accurate understanding of the impact of the curriculum. Consequently, some of the priorities for improvement have not been precisely or consistently implemented.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Teaching does not routinely check what pupils know and understand. This means learning activities do not match what pupils know and can do. This is a particular issue in mathematics where, as a result, misconceptions are not swiftly addressed. Pupils do not achieve as well as they should. The school must ensure that teaching checks pupils' understanding effectively so that all pupils achieve ambitious outcomes.
- The implementation of the phonics curriculum does not always reflect the ambitious intent of leaders. This means that some pupils do not learn phonics well and they have gaps in their phonics knowledge. Leaders need to ensure that the school's phonics

programme is delivered effectively in all phases of the school and by all staff who teach pupils to read.

- Leaders, including those responsible for governance, do not have sufficiently detailed oversight of the quality of education. As a result, some of the priorities for improvement have not been timely nor consistently implemented. The school should ensure those responsible for curriculum development have the appropriate training and opportunities to check the impact of the curriculum. The school should also ensure the governing body receive sufficiently detailed information to support and hold leaders to account.

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	113066
Local authority	Devon
Inspection number	10344464
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	186
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Tanya Smith
Headteacher	Louise Herbert
Website	www.clyststmary.devon.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	28 February 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- This school is part of the Three Rivers Federation.
- The school does not use alternative provision.
- There is an on-site breakfast club run by the school.

Information about this inspection

The inspector(s) 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 the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and art. For each deep dive, the inspector discussed the curriculum with teachers, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of 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 met with the executive headteacher, the head of school, the special educational needs coordinator, subject leaders, members of the governing body and the school's advisor from Devon County Council.
- The inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school site.
- The inspectors gathered parents' views by considering the responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View, and by talking to parents after school. The inspectors also evaluated responses to Ofsted's online staff and pupil surveys.

Inspection team

James Gentile, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Cameron Lancaster

Ofsted Inspector

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