

Inspection of Messing Primary School

School Road, Messing, Colchester, Essex CO5 9TH

Inspection dates:	10 and 11 June 2025
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Good

The headteacher of this school is Charlotte Brown. This school is part of New Hall 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 (CEO), Katherine Jeffrey, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Paul Tiffen.

What is it like to attend this school?

Messing Primary School is ambitious for all pupils. Staff and pupils live out the school values of 'every child, every chance, every day'. Pupils are happy because they are part of a nurturing and caring environment. They know they have trusted adults to speak to if they have any concerns.

The school has high expectations for all pupils to achieve well. However, some published outcomes have varied in recent years when compared to national expectations. The school's actions to resolve these issues mean that current pupils achieve better than these outcomes.

Pupils behave well. They listen and concentrate in lessons. Classrooms are calm, orderly places where pupils listen attentively and settle quickly to the tasks that teachers set. Pupils enjoy spending time with friends at social times. Pupils are polite and kind. They respect individual differences and describe their school as inclusive.

Pupils value the wide range of opportunities for them to develop new talents and interests. Sports, arts and choir are popular, as are clubs for gardening and cooking. Pupils contribute to the local community. They deliver flowers to local residents and leave Remembrance-inspired pebbles for others to collect. Trips to a local zoo and castle, and singing at festivals, help pupils to remember more of the school's rich curriculum.

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

Since the previous inspection, the school has established a strong vision for the quality of education. The curriculum builds pupils' knowledge and skills across a broad range of subjects. The new approaches to reading and mathematics challenge all pupils to become better.

In most subjects, the curriculum is taught effectively. However, the school is still developing assessment systems to help teachers identify gaps in pupils' knowledge. This means teaching does not consistently support pupils to deepen and apply their learning so that they know and remember more. This means that pupils do not learn the school's curriculum as well as the school intends in these subjects.

The school has strengthened the teaching and assessment of writing. To engage pupils in their learning they have more choice in the content and style of writing. This has improved the accuracy and presentation of pupils' work. However, pupils do not always have the opportunities to apply their writing skills with fluency across subjects. Pupils do not always use and apply their skills confidently in different contexts.

Reading is a priority. Children learn to read as soon as they start school. Staff have the necessary expertise to teach phonics effectively. Books are well matched to their current stages of reading. Checks on pupils' learning in phonics have improved. Pupils' phonics knowledge is carefully monitored. Those who need extra help receive targeted interventions to help them catch up. Pupils become confident and fluent readers.

The school is ambitious for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to achieve well. Staff work to carefully identify and meet pupils' needs. Plans to support pupils' learning are clear, and staff use them well. Staff receive effective training. They are knowledgeable and support pupils with SEND effectively. Pupils get the right support to enable them to be successful in school.

Children get off to a positive start in the early years. They have lots of opportunities to play and learn. They enjoy learning through well-planned activities. Staff engage meaningfully with children and encourage them to develop their vocabulary. Routines are well established. The curriculum is well planned. This allows children to be well prepared for the next stage in their education.

Pupils behave extremely well. The school has established a consistent approach to managing pupils' behaviour. Staff understand it and apply it consistently. Pupils behave well around school and at breaktimes. Older pupils are eager to take on responsibilities at lunchtimes.

Pupils follow a well-planned programme of personal development. They learn about healthy relationships and how to stay safe. The 'no outsiders' programme ensures that pupils are tolerant of those different to themselves. Pupils acknowledge that everyone is different. They take pride in being part of an inclusive school. Many pupils have leadership roles. These include being on the school council and roles such as house captains, gardening leaders and librarians. Pupils in these roles take their responsibilities seriously. For example, recent campaigns have been effective in raising awareness of mental health and the importance of recycling materials.

Staff are proud to work at the school. They feel very well supported and know that leaders are mindful of their well-being.

Governors have a firm understanding of the school's work. They hold leaders to account for the performance of the school. However, the trust board does not always have the same level of understanding because of its reliance on governors to complete this role. As a result, additional support for improvement is not always provided as quickly as it could be.

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 subjects, assessment is not used effectively to check pupils' understanding or match learning with what pupils are able to do. This affects how well pupils learn the curriculum and how well they know and remember more. The school should ensure

that there is an effective approach to assessment so that the curriculum is implemented with consistency across all subjects.

- In some subjects, pupils do not practise and develop their writing as well as they should. This affects pupils' confidence to apply their writing knowledge with fluency. The school should ensure that staff have consistent expectations of, and approaches to, the teaching of writing across all subjects so that pupils improve the quality of their writing across the curriculum.
- At times, trustee oversight of the work and impact of the school is not as developed as it could be. This means that the school does not always receive the support it needs quickly enough. Trustees must make sure that they have the knowledge and information that they need to hold the school to account for pupils' education and that they continue to improve the communication with the governing body.

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	139252
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	10378524
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	86
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Paul Tiffen
CEO of the trust	Katherine Jeffrey
Headteacher	Charlotte Brown
Website	www.messingprimaryschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	27 March 2024, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of New Hall Multi Academy Trust.
- The school uses one unregistered alternative provider.

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.
- Inspectors met with a range of leaders, including senior leaders and the special education needs co-ordinator. They also met with representatives of the board of trustees and the local governing body.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics and history. Inspectors held discussions with leaders 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 observed pupils' behaviour in lessons, around school and at social times. They considered pupils' views about behaviour in school. They also spoke with staff about their workload and well-being.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff, pupils and parents; 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 range of documents, including school policies, curriculum plans and minutes from meetings of the trust board.
- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted's pupil survey and Ofsted's staff survey. They also considered the responses to Ofsted's online survey for parents, Ofsted Parent View, including any free-text comments.

Inspection team

Rob James, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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