

Great Clacton Church of England (Voluntary Aided) Junior School

Craigfield, Great Clacton, Clacton-on-Sea, Essex CO15 4HR

Inspection dates

8–9 November 2016

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The headteacher provides strong leadership. Together with the enthusiastic deputy headteacher and senior leaders, she has brought about considerable improvements to pupils' achievement and to the quality of teaching.
- Governors are actively involved in school life and know the school well. They keep themselves informed about pupils' progress and hold leaders to account for the standards pupils achieve.
- The quality of teaching is good. Teachers plan interesting lessons and have high expectations of what pupils can attain. Teaching assistants provide effective support. Consequently, pupils make good progress.
- While pupils' attendance is improving, disadvantaged pupils' attendance is not consistently good enough.
- Parents are very positive about the school's work. Many say that the school is well led and would recommend Great Clacton Junior School to others.
- The curriculum offers many opportunities for pupils to apply their basic skills across other subject areas. As a result, pupils successfully broaden their knowledge and understanding.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to their learning. They behave well in lessons and around the school.
- The teaching of reading is not as strong as other subjects. Teachers do not consistently ensure that pupils receive books and work that are suitable to their ability.
- Governors' scrutiny of the pupil premium funding is not fully effective at demonstrating how it is used to benefit disadvantaged pupils.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the teaching of reading so that more pupils make rapid progress, and reach at least the expected standard by the end of Year 6, by ensuring that:
 - pupils are given books to read that match their current ability
 - all pupils are taught comprehension skills effectively
 - teachers use their professional judgement to ensure that they plan their teaching to meet the needs of all pupils.
- Improve the attendance of disadvantaged pupils so that it is at least in line with the national average.
- Improve the governors' effectiveness by monitoring pupil premium funding precisely to ensure that it has a clear impact on outcomes for pupils.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Leaders and governors have a clear sense of purpose and direction. They evaluate the school's strengths and weaknesses accurately, and focus continually on what needs to be done to make the school better. As a result, the school is now improving rapidly.
- The headteacher is ambitious for the school and she is ably supported by the deputy headteacher. Together, they have shown considerable determination in raising pupils' achievement and improving teaching.
- Parents are universally positive about the school. They have confidence in the leadership team and feel that staff are supportive and approachable. One parent spoke for many by saying 'the school has come on in leaps and bounds and I cannot fault it.'
- As a result of focused leadership training, subject leaders are now more confident in their roles. Leaders monitor the quality of teaching effectively by checking the impact it has on improving pupils' progress. As a result, pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics is rapidly improving.
- Leaders monitor the performance of teachers rigorously and effectively to improve the quality of teaching. Appropriate support is given to ensure that the quality of teaching and learning is constantly improving. Teachers appreciate the opportunities they receive to improve their practice and they take on board the advice they are given. As a result, more teaching is consistently good over time, teachers feel appreciated and staff morale is high.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced. It provides pupils with a wide range of opportunities to increase their experiences beyond their local community. For example, pupils go on a range of visits to places of interest that enhance their understanding of the topics they learn about in their classrooms. Themed events such as 'equality week' and 'international day' add to the richness of the curriculum and broaden pupils' understanding of cultural diversity.
- The school successfully uses the majority of the pupil premium funding to ensure that any barriers to learning are reduced. Leaders acknowledge that they need to deploy more resources to support disadvantaged pupils to make more rapid progress so that the difference between their attainment and the attainment of non-disadvantaged pupils nationally is diminished.
- The primary physical education (PE) and sport premium is used effectively. Specialist teachers have been brought in to deliver high-quality PE lessons. This is increasing pupils' engagement in physical activity and encouraging more participation in inter-school competitions.
- The school provides good opportunities for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils understand the school's 'gospel values' and their importance in developing the social skills needed to prepare them for adult life. These values are linked to the fundamental British values of democracy, rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance. In order to extend pupils' understanding of different

cultures further, the school has recently developed links with another junior school in Essex whose pupils come from a range of diverse ethnic and religious backgrounds.

Governance of the school

- Governors provide good support and challenge to leaders. Governors have a clear and accurate overview of the school's performance because they have a sound knowledge and understanding of pupils' achievement information. Consequently, governors hold leaders to account competently for the school's work.
- Governors are currently undertaking further training to enable them to carry out their roles and responsibilities even more rigorously. They are keen to ensure that all governors continue to be effective and ask pertinent questions about how well pupils are doing, challenge any underachievement of groups of pupils and make insightful decisions regarding the performance of teachers related to their pay.
- Governors do not ensure that pupil premium funding is used to improve pupils' achievement. They are aware of the pastoral support the funding supports. However, they do not evaluate fully the difference the funding makes to the pupils' progress and attainment.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Comprehensive processes are in place to support pupils and their families where necessary. The designated safeguarding lead knows pupils well and is in a strong position to take prompt action when needed.
- All staff and governors are trained in safeguarding procedures. Effective systems and good relationships promote a safe culture in the school.
- Pupils say that they feel safe at school and are confident that staff will quickly resolve any issues or concerns.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teachers have high expectations for all pupils. As a result, pupils work hard in lessons. The work in their books is well presented and shows great care.
- The school's chosen assessment system of unaided 'hot' and 'cold' tasks is used consistently throughout the school. This helps teachers identify what pupils do well, and what they need to do to improve. As a result, teaching is closely aligned to the specific needs of all pupils and, consequently, pupils make good progress from their starting points.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are well supported. This is because teaching assistants have good subject knowledge and work collaboratively with teachers. Staff know the pupils well and can adapt the activities to meet pupils' individual needs.
- Effective teaching in writing and mathematics across the school ensures that all pupils make good progress. Teachers' demonstrations and explanations are clear and

informative. Teachers use questioning skilfully to challenge pupils' thinking and to check how well they have understood the work. Pupils respond enthusiastically with well-considered answers.

- The most able pupils are challenged well in lessons through activities that extend their thinking. For example, in one lesson, pupils were asked to make a video to teach less confident pupils how to add and multiply fractions. The pupils were highly motivated during the task. It required them to think deeply about their learning in order to apply it to a real situation.
- The teaching of reading comprehension skills is not fully effective. Teachers use several commercially produced teaching resources to teach skills such as inference and deduction. Where teachers adhere too rigidly to the scheme, some pupils are held back while teachers meet the needs of less confident members of the class. Consequently, the pace of learning slows.
- Pupils are provided with reading books that are not well pitched to their stage of development. This means that some pupils are given books that are either too easy or too hard.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils are confident and polite towards each other. They enjoy learning and settle quickly to their work. They are proud of the school and the part they play in its ongoing success.
- Pupils show good attitudes to learning. Teachers have created a safe learning environment where it is acceptable to say 'I'm not so good at...'. Pupils understand that knowing their personal strengths and weaknesses will help them to progress quicker.
- Pupils learn about healthy lifestyles and having regular exercise. They are encouraged to take part in sports activities at playtimes. Participation in sport has increased and pupils enjoy competitive activities.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding is well developed through cross-curricular themes, regular visitors to the school and off-site trips. Older pupils can give real-life examples of how they have applied the school's motto of 'learn, achieve, believe' in their own lives.
- Pupils show positive attitudes to diversity and say the school has taught them that it is wrong to judge people on anything other than the way they behave. Inspection evidence shows that pupils are kind and treat each other equally.
- Pupils told inspectors that they feel safe and they know that their teachers will help them with any concerns. The overwhelming majority of staff, pupils and parents who completed online questionnaires during the inspection agreed that pupils are safe at this school.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- During the inspection, lessons were purposeful and flowed smoothly.
- Pupils have good manners and are courteous and respectful to others. At lunchtime, the dining hall is an orderly place. Pupils enjoy socialising while eating their lunch sensibly.
- The playground is well supervised at breaktimes and lunchtimes and there is a range of activities on offer. As a result, pupils play safely and well together. This confirms the school's records of good behaviour over time.
- Overall attendance is improving, as is the proportion of pupils who are persistently absent. There is an upward trend of improvement. The vast majority of pupils arrive at school on time and are eager to learn. The school is proactive in working with parents where pupils' attendance is causing concern.
- The attendance of disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is improving, but remains low. The school is monitoring this closely and working with families to improve the attendance of these pupils.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Current pupils are making good progress in a wide range of subjects. The work in pupils' books and the school's assessment information confirm that pupils are now making much better progress than they have done in the past.
- Pupils' progress in writing has improved greatly because of teachers' high expectations and the challenging targets that they set for pupils. This was reflected in the key stage 2 national tests in 2016, with pupils making slightly better progress than their peers nationally.
- Disadvantaged pupils now make good progress from their starting points. Assessment information from the national tests in 2015 and 2016 no longer accurately reflect the progress this group of pupils make. The school has sensibly used pupil premium funding to ensure that pupils are physically and emotionally ready to learn. For example, they provide breakfast in the morning for some pupils, and counselling sessions for others. However, despite an improving picture, disadvantaged pupils still need to continue to catch up with other pupils nationally.
- Improvements to teaching mean that the most able pupils are making better progress than in the past. This is because learning activities challenge pupils appropriately. These pupils are routinely provided with extension work that gives them an opportunity to apply their knowledge and understanding.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. This is due to effective support from well-trained teaching assistants, in small group sessions or through one-to-one support in the classroom. Leaders monitor pupils' progress carefully and put into place the additional support and intervention needed.

- Although improving, standards in reading are not as high as in writing and mathematics. Pupils' comprehension skills are not as well developed as their ability to read what the words on the page say. Until now, this has had a clear impact on pupils' performance in the key stage 2 national tests, with many pupils unable to finish the papers in the allotted time. Pupils are now making better progress in developing their comprehension skills, although progress in reading remains slower than in other subjects.

School details

Unique reference number	140367
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	10021790

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Junior
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	7 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	248
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Reverend Mark Mulryne
Headteacher	Alison Syred-Paul
Telephone number	01255 424 906
Website	www.gtclacton-jun.essex.sch.uk/
Email address	admin@gtclacton-jun.essex.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Great Clacton Church of England Junior School converted to an academy in March 2014. The academy sponsor is the Diocese of Chelmsford Vine Schools Trust.
- This is an average-sized junior school.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils whose first language is not believed to be English is well below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who receive special educational needs support is broadly in line with the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have a statement of special educational needs or an

education, health and care plan is above the national average.

- The school meets the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school does not comply with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish about complaints procedures or equality objectives.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in each class and attended a whole-school assembly. Several of the observations were carried out with the headteacher or deputy headteacher.
- A wide range of pupils' work books were looked at by inspectors throughout the inspection.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, subject leaders, the inclusion leader, four governors (including the chair of the governing body) and a representative from the Vine Schools Trust.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils informally in class and around the school at break and lunchtimes to seek their views about the school. Inspectors also attended the breakfast and after-school clubs.
- Inspectors met with groups of pupils more formally to discuss many aspects of school life. They also looked at the 16 responses from the online pupil questionnaire.
- An inspector heard some pupils in Year 3 and Year 6 read.
- Inspectors scrutinised the school website and a range of school documents including assessment information, minutes from governors' meetings, the school's own evaluation and safeguarding records.
- Inspectors considered the 40 responses to the online Parent View questionnaire, including free-text comments. They also spoke to some parents before school at the beginning of the inspection.
- Inspectors took account of the 17 questionnaires completed by members of staff.

Inspection team

Fiona Webb, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Wendy Varney

Her Majesty's Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making a complaint about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/ofsted.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2016