

Inspection of Cliftonville Primary School

Northumberland Avenue, Cliftonville, Margate, Kent CT9 3LY

Inspection dates: 25 and 26 June 2024

Overall effectiveness

Good

The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Outstanding
Previous inspection grade	Outstanding

The headteacher of this school is Claire Whichcord. This school is part of the Coastal Academies Trust, which means that other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by a chief executive officer, Kathryn Greig, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Dave Roberts.

This school was last inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 eight years ago and judged 'Outstanding' under a previous inspection framework. This reflected the school's overall effectiveness under the inspection framework in use at the time.

From then until November 2020, the school was exempted by law from routine inspection, so there has been a longer gap than usual between graded inspections under section 5 of the Act. The school received an ungraded inspection under section 8 of the Act on 17 and 18 January 2023. Judgements in this report are based on the current inspection framework and also reflect changes that may have happened at any point since the last graded inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils thrive in the care of staff at Cliftonville Primary School. Strong relationships are the foundation of their experience, and pupils treat staff and one another with respect. Parents reference the 'lovely community atmosphere' and the 'brilliant pastoral support' that their children receive.

All pupils, from the early years upwards, can talk with confidence about their seven school values of independence, being 'safe and settled', resilience, respect, aspiration, learning and demonstrating 'community unity'. They understand well what these mean and strive to live them out as they go about their days.

Pupils participate positively around school and are keen to work hard and do well. They engage readily in their learning and are keen to show what they understand. Pupils taking national tests in 2023 did not achieve as well as they could have done. The school has taken prompt action to remedy this. Current pupils benefit from teaching that helps them remember their learning and connect it to what has come before.

Pupils take responsibility in this school and contribute to its success. This is evident in the members of the 'Junior Leadership Team', who talk about their ambition to make things stronger still. Other responsibilities include being house captains, language, reading or well-being ambassadors, and young environment leaders.

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

A carefully designed curriculum across subjects is planned from the early years upwards to ensure that all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) achieve well. The foundations laid in Nursery and Reception are exceptionally strong, preparing children well for their next steps.

Across lessons, staff show expert subject knowledge. There is a sharp focus on developing vocabulary and pupils are increasingly able to discuss their learning using precise subject-specific terminology. In the strongest lessons, planned activities are well connected to the intended learning, so that pupils have opportunities to deliberately practise and reinforce the key skills. However, this is not as consistently strong across all lessons. Regular opportunities to revisit prior learning, for example through initiatives such as the 'nothing new, just review' system, mean that pupils are well supported to remember their learning in the longer term.

The school thinks very carefully about its provision, ensuring it meets the varied needs of the pupils in their school. This is especially evident in the school's creation of 'the hive', where pupils with additional needs receive tailored and bespoke support to ensure they begin their school journeys in the best way possible. Across lessons, pupils with SEND are well supported. Staff have astute understanding of both their needs and the strategies needed to support them.

Reading is made a high priority in the school. The newly developed library is a large and inviting space, and there are daily opportunities for reading through the curriculum. Phonics is taught well, and pupils are supported with interventions if they struggle to read with fluency.

The early years environment is exceptionally well planned and implemented to meet the needs of its children. Staff get to know their needs very quickly and adapt work to meet these needs. Children are engaged by carefully planned opportunities in an environment that is rich in language and talk. These features help children to make up any ground rapidly so that they are well prepared to start key stage 1.

The school has a passion and drive that the pupils in their care receive the best chances in life. This is exceptionally evident in the way it goes about supporting the wider development of pupils, and their families. The multicultural nature of the school is actively celebrated. Pupils also take lead in this work. For example, those pupils who are 'Language Ambassadors' support pupils with English as an additional language when they first join the school. This is a school that knows its pupils, and their families, exceptionally well. Staff are approachable and they forge strong relationships through the well-being hub known as 'the house', a literal front door through which families can access a range of additional support and meet with staff who will help them.

Key stage 2 outcomes in the 2023 national tests were disappointing, with reading and mathematics performing below national expectations. Leaders have responded to this robustly. They have employed a series of measures to support pupils in learning effectively in these subjects. These include revisions to their taught curriculum, as well as bespoke interventions and groupings so that pupils can learn in a way tailored to their specific needs. This is already beginning to show impact in the performance lower down in the school, including the improvement in phonics outcomes. However, the full impact of this work is not yet evident.

Leaders share the same aspirational vision for pupils in the school. Their regular monitoring allows them to check that their actions are having the impact that they want them to. Governors and trustees have a very secure understanding of the school and provide effective support to ensure that the provision continues to develop and improve.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school has implemented a range of initiatives to improve pupils' achievement in reading and mathematics. However, these are not fully embedded and so the

impact is not yet evident. The school needs to continue to embed these strategies in order to support all pupils in doing well.

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 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	140012
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10296391
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	828
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Dave Roberts
Headteacher	Claire Whichcord
Website	www.cliftonvilleprimary.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	17 and 18 January 2023, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school has been part of the Coastal Academies Trust since December 2013.
- The school does not currently use any alternative providers.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.

- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspection team held meetings with the headteacher, senior leaders, teachers and pupils. The lead inspector met with the members of the governing body, including the chair of governors. The lead inspector also held a meeting with the chair of the trust board.

- The inspection team carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, geography, science, design technology and information technology. 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.
- 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 inspection team took account of a range of other information, including the school's development plans, school policies and governors' and trustees' minutes.
- The team spoke with pupils about their experience of the school. They took account of parent and carer and staff views through conversations and responses to Ofsted's surveys.

Inspection team

Marian Feeley, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Catherine Hylands	Ofsted Inspector
Anne Allen	Ofsted Inspector
Sara Wakefield	Ofsted Inspector

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