

Inspection of an outstanding school: Cliftonville Primary School

Northumberland Avenue, Cliftonville, Margate, Kent CT9 3LY

Inspection dates:

17 and 18 January 2023

Outcome

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of outstanding as a result of this ungraded (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might not be as high if a graded (section 5) inspection were carried out now. The next inspection will therefore be a graded inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Leaders strive to ensure that pupils are at the heart of all that the school does. Staff share a strong ambition for all pupils, whatever their starting points, to 'soar to success'.

Pupils enjoy coming to school and are ready to learn. They share respectful and warm relationships with staff, who care about their well-being. Pupils support and look out for each other. For example, older pupils help their younger peers to read. Children in the early years settle well into new routines. Leaders work hard to strengthen relationships with parents so that they are well informed and involved in their children's learning.

Pupils are safe and know that they can speak to any adult when they are worried. Bullying is uncommon, but it is dealt with swiftly if it does occur. The vast majority of pupils behave very well, although leaders and pupils report that learning is sometimes affected by the poor behaviour of a small number of pupils. Staff address this quickly when it happens.

Pupils learn about diversity through a carefully chosen range of reading texts and the school's extensive personal development programme. Pupils benefit from many opportunities to demonstrate the school's values. For example, pupil ambassadors help the community by promoting their road safety campaign.

There is a wide range of exciting clubs and trips on offer to enrich pupils' learning. Leaders ensure that those who would benefit the most are encouraged to take part.

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

Leaders have high expectations for all pupils to achieve their best. They have planned a broad and interesting curriculum that meets the needs of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The curriculum is well sequenced in all subjects so that pupils revisit and build on their learning. In the vast majority of subjects, the knowledge that pupils must know and remember is set out clearly, from the Nursery onwards.

Teachers use their expert knowledge to check that pupils have a strong grasp of subject content. They adapt their plans to fill any gaps. Pupils across the school benefit from many opportunities to revisit their learning through 'nothing new, just review'. Pupils with SEND are accurately identified and receive the adaptations that they need to achieve well.

Pupils remember subject-specific vocabulary and use this accurately in their work. Pupils confidently apply previous learning to new and more complex tasks. For example, in Year 5 history, pupils use their knowledge of Roman and Greek Empires to explore early modern Islamic Empires. In art, Year 2 pupils show expertise in contour hatching and smudging techniques when drawing Florence Nightingale.

Leaders are sharply focused on improving and promoting reading across the school. Staff are well trained to skilfully deliver the school's chosen phonics programme. Many pupils become confident and fluent readers. However, too many pupils are further behind in their reading than they should be. Leaders know that pupils who find it more difficult to read need help to improve quickly. They have put many interventions in place so that pupils receive the precise help that they need to catch up.

Children in the early years make a strong start. They take part in phonics learning as soon as they begin school. The indoor and outdoor environments are well resourced so that pupils can further expand their skills and knowledge through play. Adults know and care for the emotional and physical needs of the children well. Children develop a secure understanding of early number. They independently use tens frames to make numbers and turn them into number sentences, for example.

Pupils behave well, and respond positively to the newly implemented behaviour policy. They enjoy the praise and rewards that they receive when they work and concentrate hard. Although many pupils attend school often, some miss out on their learning as they do not attend enough. Leaders are aware of this and have systems in place, including working closely with parents, to improve this.

Pupils learn about personal issues, such as relationships and consent, in an age-appropriate way. They develop an awareness of culture and diversity through trips to buildings of religious significance and carefully planned assemblies. Pupils enjoy a wide range of trips to areas of local interest, such as the Ramsgate Tunnels, where they experience what war time was like in real life. They have many opportunities to demonstrate leadership skills, for example as peer mentors and language ambassadors. Trustees and governors make sure that they know the school well so that they can provide the right amount of support and challenge. Staff's well-being is a key priority for

leaders, who listen to the views of staff regularly. Leaders have taken proactive steps to reduce workload. They provide many opportunities for professional development so that staff feel valued. Leaders have a clear vision and desire to continue to improve the school for the benefit of every child who attends.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have strong knowledge of safeguarding and the issues that might affect pupils in their school's context. Staff receive high-quality training so that they can identify and report any concerns quickly. Leaders keep excellent records, which they use to closely monitor pupils they are concerned about. They seek help from external agencies so that pupils and their families get the support that they might need quickly. Adults are checked carefully so that leaders are sure that they are safe to work in the school.

Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe online. They also benefit from learning about water, fire and road safety.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Reading outcomes, including for phonics and at key stages 1 and 2, are not currently as good as they should be. Leaders need to continue to evaluate and refine their chosen phonics programme and reading interventions, to ensure that all pupils become confident and fluent readers who are prepared for the next stage of their learning.
- Some pupils, particularly those who are disadvantaged or who have SEND, do not attend school frequently enough. Leaders need to continue to review and adapt the strategies that they have already put in place so that pupils receive the most effective support and intervention that they might need to attend school more often.

Background

When we have judged a school to be outstanding, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains outstanding. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be outstanding in November 2016.

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](#)' 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.

School details

Unique reference number	140012
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10240589
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	830
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Robin Curtis
Headteacher	Claire Whichcord
Website	www.cliftonvilleprimary.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	30 November and 1 December 2016, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is the only primary school that is part of the Coastal Academies Trust.
- The school uses alternative provision from one registered provider.
- There is a breakfast club on site, run by the school.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspectors completed deep dives in the following subjects: early reading, mathematics, history and art. This included meeting with subject leaders and talking with staff and pupils. The inspector also visited lessons and looked at pupils' work.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documents, including leaders' evaluation of the school and priorities for improvement. They met with senior leaders, a selection of subject leaders, teachers and support staff.

- During the inspection, the lead inspector met with representatives from the local governing body and members of the trust, including the chief executive officer.
- The arrangements for safeguarding were reviewed by scrutinising records and through discussions with staff and pupils.
- The inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in class and at other times of the day.
- The views of pupils, parents and staff were considered through discussions and a review of Ofsted's surveys.

Inspection team

Zoë Harris, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Andrea Carter

Ofsted Inspector

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