

Cliftonville Primary School

Northumberland Avenue, Cliftonville, Margate, Kent CT9 3LY

Inspection dates

30 November–1 December 2016

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school

- The headteacher provides outstanding leadership for the school. She is unwavering and uncompromising in her determination to provide the best possible learning and personal experiences for pupils. A parent wrote, 'I was very confident to send my child to Cliftonville after meeting the headteacher and seeing how much passion she has for the school.'
- The deputy headteacher and senior leaders, including governors, share the headteacher's very high expectations of staff. Leaders have created a culture of ambition and aspiration for pupils and staff that flows through the school community and beyond.
- The school is outward-looking. Leaders are committed to improving the education of pupils across the schools within the trust and the wider community.
- There has been a marked improvement in pupils' outcomes since the academy opened. Pupils make significantly above average progress overall and as a result, standards are improving rapidly in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils behave especially well in lessons and throughout the school. They are polite, caring and respectful of each other and adults.
- Children get off to a flying start in the early years because the quality of the provision is excellent. Children are happy and settle very well into the school routines.
- All groups of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and the most able pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, are very effectively supported to make strong progress from their starting points.
- Teaching and learning are outstanding. Teachers motivate pupils to want to learn and do their best because they make learning interesting, challenging and fun.
- Rigorous safeguarding procedures and the high importance placed on pupils' well-being ensure that pupils feel safe and secure.
- Pupils flourish and thrive because they are extremely well looked after in a nurturing environment. Individual academic, social and emotional needs are carefully identified and supported.
- The curriculum ensures excellent opportunities for pupils' academic and personal development. Leaders plan a review of the curriculum to identify what could make it even better.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Review the curriculum so that it meets pupils' needs as well as their interests even more effectively and fully supports continued improvement in attainment across a range of subjects.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Outstanding

- The headteacher provides outstanding leadership for the school. Her commitment and dedication to providing the best possible education for pupils has inspired and motivated leaders and staff who share her ambition. One parent commented, 'The headteacher is dynamic and highly professional. She shows strong, positive leadership and the children and her staff all seem extremely happy and motivated.'
- Senior leaders and year group leaders share the headteacher's vision and relentless work in the pursuit of excellence. There is no complacency, but a steely determination to build on current successes and secure further improvement, especially in pupils' attainment.
- The school is outward-looking. The headteacher and the executive headteacher of the academy are committed to providing the best possible experiences, not only for the pupils of Cliftonville but also for all pupils in the community. The headteacher's work with secondary schools within the academy trust ensures that aspirations and expectations remain high, especially as pupils move into their next schools.
- There is a sharp focus on developing leaders within the staff, through identifying and growing individual talent and leadership potential. High-quality professional development makes an excellent contribution to the quality of teaching and learning and leadership. Staff value the quality of support and guidance they receive, which gives them opportunities to develop, excel and become effective leaders.
- The leadership team has created a culture of high aspirations, challenge and support, which ensures that all groups of pupils thrive and flourish. There is a strong commitment to inclusion. As a result, pupils' self-esteem and aspirations are raised and they strive to do the very best they can.
- Senior leaders know the strengths of the school extremely well through incisive and frequent checks on the quality of teaching and learning, and pupils' progress. As a result, whole-school priorities are correctly identified and detailed plans for further improvement are established. Support that is needed for pupils and teachers is rapid and effective. Leaders' expectations of staff and pupils are very high.
- Leaders are highly successful at improving the quality of teaching and learning across the school. The school has very effective procedures for managing the performance of teachers. Where any weaknesses are identified, training and development are provided in a culture of support, mentoring and coaching. This is linked very effectively to whole-school priorities as well as individual needs. Teachers at the start of their teaching career are supported extremely well.
- Leaders' approach to tracking pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics is rigorous. Systems are used effectively by staff to determine the progress of individuals and groups of pupils. This enables leaders to swiftly target support, interventions or extra challenge where necessary to bring about rapid improvement in outcomes. Leaders ensure that no pupils are left behind and the most able pupils are doing as well as they should.
- Senior leaders ensure that effective use is made of the pupil premium funding to

raise achievement for disadvantaged pupils, including those who are most-able. Actions taken are robust. Leaders identify any potential barriers to learning and provide support to minimise or overcome these. As a result, differences in achievement between disadvantaged pupils and other pupils nationally are diminishing quickly.

- The primary physical education and sport funding is used effectively to increase pupils' skills and engagement in a wide variety of sports. The funding is used in a range of ways, including participation in the 'Thanet Super Passport' scheme. This scheme involves over 20 schools in the local area. It provides pupils with opportunities to participate in sports festivals and competitions and forge links with local clubs and coaches. Sports leaders also share good practice and enhance the skills of colleagues. The funding extends the school's existing strong provision and improves outcomes for pupils. Last year the school achieved the silver School Games Mark in recognition of its work.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced. It is inclusive, so all pupils have similar opportunities to excel. Equal opportunities are promoted exceptionally well and pupils learn without fear of discrimination of any type.
- An excellent range of clubs enriches the curriculum. Currently pupils can choose from nearly 30 different clubs, including many sports activities, Spanish, gardening, choir, sketching, Shakespeare and scrabble. Visits and visitors to school are an integral part of the curriculum. These activities help to motivate pupils as learners and help them acquire new skills. They make a significant contribution to pupils' personal and academic development by broadening their horizons and raising their aspirations.
- The focus on improving pupils' reading, writing and mathematical skills, from previous low starting points, has been successful and there are many opportunities for pupils to use these skills in other areas of their learning. Leaders have correctly identified, and planned for, a review of the existing broad and balanced curriculum. This is to ensure that pupils benefit from a renewed focus and depth of knowledge in a range of other subjects and that the curriculum even more effectively meets pupils' needs and builds on their interests.
- The curriculum is strongly underpinned by pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils are very well prepared for life in modern Britain because staff and pupils demonstrate fundamental British values in all areas of school life. Respect and tolerance are fostered extremely effectively through staff emphasis on the school's values and the subjects taught. In their questionnaire, almost all pupils agreed that the school encourages them to respect people from other backgrounds and to treat everyone equally.
- Most parents are supportive of the school and would recommend it to other parents. One wrote, 'There is excellent communication with parents as to how we can work together to help our children progress.' Another commented, 'I couldn't be happier with this school and feel it is a safe, secure, enjoyable and well-managed school for my child to attend.'
- As well as working with schools in the academy trust, the school belongs to a local informal collaboration of primary schools. This enables teachers to share outstanding practice and confirm the accuracy of their assessments of pupils' work.

Governance of the school

- Governors share the headteacher's ambition and aspiration for pupils and make a strong contribution to the strategic direction of the school. Members of the governing body have a wealth of relevant skills and experience. This enables them to challenge and support the headteacher and senior leaders and hold them to account very effectively for the school's performance.
- Governors are exceptionally well informed by the headteacher and senior leaders and their own monitoring work. They know in detail the school's strengths and what it needs to do next. The focus of their visits is linked tightly to whole-school priorities. They are dedicated and committed to their responsibilities.
- Governors keep a close check on the pupil premium funding to ensure that it is used appropriately and is making a difference for pupils.
- Governors ensure that all statutory responsibilities are met, including those relating to safeguarding.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders work very effectively with parents and other stakeholders and create a clear culture of safeguarding in the school. The safety and well-being of pupils are very high priorities.
- All staff know how to react if they have any concerns about a pupil's welfare. They are aware of their responsibilities for keeping pupils safe and senior leaders ensure that they are vigilant in doing so.
- Regular and high-quality training for all staff is provided on safeguarding matters and careful records are maintained of all those who have completed it.
- There is a thorough system in place to check that staff, governors and volunteers are suitable to work with children.
- Rigorous systems, procedures and policies are in place and kept up to date. Record-keeping of any concerns and referrals to outside agencies are well organised. Relationships with parents and external agencies are positive and supportive to ensure that pupils quickly get any help that they may need.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Outstanding

- Teaching captures the interest and imagination of pupils. As a result, pupils are highly motivated, engage extremely well in learning and make excellent progress from their starting points.
- Teachers and teaching assistants have very good relationships with pupils and high expectations for what they can achieve and how they should behave. As a result, pupils work hard, want to do well and persevere even if they struggle at first. Pupils thrive in the positive 'can do' culture that all adults promote exceptionally well.
- Teachers are very skilful at questioning pupils. They probe and extend pupils' thinking and encourage pupils to expand and justify their answers. 'Convince Me' posters around the school remind pupils that they are expected to do this. Questioning enables

teachers to check pupils' understanding as well as to pick up on any misconceptions during lessons, providing more support or extra challenge when necessary.

- Assessment information is used particularly well to enable teachers to plan effectively. They ensure that teaching assistants are clear about which pupils they are supporting and why. Teachers and teaching assistants work very well together to make sure that all pupils are fully included and pupils of all abilities are supported and challenged very effectively. As a result, all groups of pupils make strong progress over time, including disadvantaged pupils, those who are most-able and those who speak English as an additional language.
- The school's policy for marking and feedback is used consistently across the school. Pupils said that teachers' comments help them know how to improve their work. Teachers provide pupils with excellent models of learning so that pupils have a very clear idea of what successful work of a high quality looks like.
- A love of reading is forged right from the start of school and staff work relentlessly to engage pupils in reading. The school library is open to parents and pupils before school starts in the morning and also during holiday times. Reading at home is strongly supported and encouraged. Pupils are motivated by an internet-based reading programme that gives them access to a wide range of books. Consistently strong phonics teaching enables pupils to read unfamiliar words with confidence. Older pupils read with fluency and expression, develop good skills of comprehension and inference and can talk with confidence about their favourite authors and styles of writing.
- Teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve in writing and successful actions have been taken to improve outcomes. Pupils talk through their ideas before committing them to paper and are given good opportunities to write for meaningful purposes. Pupils' books and displays in classes and around the school demonstrate the very rapid progress they make, including in handwriting, spelling, punctuation and grammar. The quality of their writing is often very imaginative and impressive.
- In mathematics, the school has embedded a mathematics mastery curriculum, which focuses on reasoning, problem-solving and applying mathematical skills in a range of ways. As a result, pupils develop an impressive depth of knowledge. Pupils' enjoyment of mathematics has increased. A group of pupils were very proud to have recently taken part in the regional finals of the 'Young Mathematician of the Year' competition and others were thrilled to have entered the 'Primary Maths Challenge'.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding. It is an exceptionally caring community.
- British values dovetail well with the school values such as respect and tolerance and are understood and promoted very well by staff and pupils. They underpin a safe and trusting learning culture within the school. Pupils feel valued and respected and consequently they are resilient and have excellent attitudes to learning.
- A parent wrote, 'We have been very pleased with the progress our children have made and the way they speak about the school is a real credit to the staff. We feel

they are given lots of opportunities to be challenged and to evolve personally and in their learning process. It is also obvious that they are being taught about fundamental values and how to respect other pupils, staff and their learning environment.'

- All staff know the pupils very well and even though the school is large, staff maintain a family feel and support individual needs very effectively. Parents agree that their children are happy at school, feel safe and are well looked after. The pastoral manager makes a significant contribution to pupils' well-being. The nurture groups are regarded as a model of excellent practice within the local authority and the academy trust.
- Pupils enjoy the responsibilities they have and take them very seriously. For example, language ambassadors help to build supportive networks in the school community and help families new to the school. Around 40 pupils are ambassadors, helping families and children in over 17 languages. Peer mentors, school council members and sports captains all play important roles in the school, which are valued by other pupils, the local and wider community. Part of the school council's work, for example, was to represent the school in its commitment to undertake global and local projects to make a positive change to people's lives.
- Pupils say they feel very safe in school and know how to keep themselves safe in a range of situations in and out of school. They know, for example, how to keep themselves safe when using the internet and other social media and actively promote e-safety for pupils and for parents. Pupils understand what bullying is, including cyber bullying, and the different forms it can take. They say that any bullying is very rare in school and understand the difference between bullying and friends falling out or being unkind. Pupils are confident to turn to teachers and other adults if they have any concerns or problems and know that they will be listened to.
- Pupils who attend the breakfast or after-school club receive a safe, healthy and sociable start or end to the school day.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Staff set high standards to which the pupils respond very well. Pupils are polite, respectful and kind towards each other and adults.
- As a result of effective behaviour management, there are very few incidents of poor behaviour. The school's behaviour policy and systems for rewarding pupils are in place and implemented consistently by all staff. School records confirm that behaviour is excellent over time and has improved for individuals.
- Pupils are well mannered and welcoming to visitors. They conduct themselves in an exemplary fashion in the playground, at lunchtimes and around the school. Pupils understand the need for rules in the school and wider community.
- Behaviour in lessons is very good. Pupils listen attentively to their teachers and each other.
- Pupils, staff and parents agree that the school makes sure that pupils are well behaved. One parent commented, 'Children understand the rules of behaviour with positive models of praise and encouragement.'
- Attendance has improved and is above average. Leaders are diligent in their work to

successfully reduce the gap in attendance between the disadvantaged pupil group and others.

Outcomes for pupils

Outstanding

- All groups of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, make substantial progress across the school from their starting points and across a range of subjects.
- The school's information on progress, which is supported by work in pupils' books, shows that the very large majority of current pupils in almost all year groups are achieving at least the expected attainment in reading, writing and mathematics.
- In the Year 1 phonics screening check in 2016, the proportion of pupils who reached the expected standard was in line with the national average. This was a marked and substantial improvement from the previous year.
- In 2016 by the end of Year 2, the proportion of pupils who reached the expected attainment for their age was below that found nationally in reading and close to national in writing and mathematics. The proportion reaching standards of a greater depth in mathematics was above average. Given the low starting points of many pupils, this represents rapid progress, which was also evident in current pupils' books.
- In 2016, pupils' progress by the end of Year 6 was significantly above average in reading, writing and mathematics.
- In reading, the proportion of pupils that reached the expected standard was in line with that found nationally, although the proportion reaching the higher standard was above average. The proportion reaching the expected standard in writing and mathematics was above that found nationally.
- In 2016, disadvantaged pupils made above-average progress compared to others nationally in mathematics. In reading and writing, progress matched that of others nationally. The overall progress of disadvantaged pupils currently in the school is improving rapidly because barriers to learning are reduced by a successful range of strategies. For example, additional support for individuals and small groups has a positive impact on their learning needs as well as their well-being, social and emotional needs where appropriate. Differences in achievement compared to all pupils nationally are rapidly diminishing for pupils currently in the school.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make rapid gains. They receive tailored support that helps them make the best possible progress from their starting points. In reading and mathematics by the end of Year 6 in 2016, pupils who had the lowest starting points at the end of key stage 1 made particularly good progress, achieving significantly above the national average.
- The most able pupils achieve well. Pupils' work in books show that teachers challenge pupils, including the most able disadvantaged pupils, to extend their learning very effectively. The proportion of Year 6 pupils who reached above the standard expected for their age was above that found nationally in reading. In mathematics, pupils are challenged well to develop their reasoning and problem-solving skills. Consequently, pupils with above average achievement when they were at the end of Year 2 achieved highly at the end of Year 6.

- Pupils who speak English as an additional language, particularly those who are new to learning English, receive very effective support. This helps them to acquire English language skills rapidly and make similar progress to others from their starting points.

Early years provision

Outstanding

- A significant proportion of children start in the early years with skills and knowledge that are well below that which is typical for their age, particularly in their communication and language, reading, writing and number skills. Many children, over one third, speak English as an additional language and a significant proportion of these are at the very early stages of learning English. A similar proportion of children are disadvantaged and around one fifth have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- Children are given an excellent start to school and make rapid progress, but the proportion that reached a good level of development in 2015 and 2016 was below average. This is because, despite the excellent provision, there is not enough time for them to catch up before moving into Year 1.
- There are very good procedures to get to know the children and their families before they start. Highly positive relationships continue throughout children's time in the early years. Parents of children in the Nursery appreciate the 'stay and play' sessions. One parent of a child in the Reception Year wrote, 'The school made my child's transition into school both comfortable and exciting for him. My son has absolutely thrived since starting at the school, the communication and support are fantastic.'
- Staff in the Nursery and Reception classes know the children very well and relationships are very positive. Individual needs are identified quickly. Small groups are supported to develop basic skills, particularly in speech and language. Nurture groups help children to thrive socially and emotionally. This helps children to overcome barriers to learning and helps them make rapid progress.
- Teaching in the early years is outstanding. All staff have clear and high expectations and ensure that children are safe, happy and engaged in their activities. Early numeracy and literacy skills, including phonics skills, are taught very effectively and in a fun way. Skilled questioning helps to develop children's language as well as their thinking and reasoning skills. Every opportunity is taken to ensure that children learn and develop early skills. Children in the Nursery, for example, were prompted to count the segments of their satsumas during snack time. Children are nurtured and challenged very well.
- Children enjoy choosing for themselves. Highly stimulating activities in all areas of learning both inside and outside the classroom spark children's curiosity and imagination. As a result, children are motivated and demonstrate a high level of involvement and engagement. Children benefit from a bright and attractive environment and an excellent range of resources.
- Behaviour is excellent. Children are considerate and share well with each other. Staff have established consistent routines so children settle quickly and know what is expected of them. Children are extremely well cared for and encouraged to look after themselves and stay safe. For example, children were prompted to be cautious of the slippery surface when they were outside exploring the frost on the ground. Children in

the Nursery regularly use the 'nose wiping station' and understand the importance of personal hygiene; as one child explained, 'We don't want to spread our germs.'

- The leadership of the early years is outstanding. Leaders have high aspirations and are determined that all children should make good or better progress. There is a strong emphasis on developing a nurturing, caring and challenging environment and inclusion for all. Leaders go the extra mile making strategic decisions to ensure that all families and children are provided with the maximum support. For example, the school buys in a speech therapist for one day a week so that children do not have to wait to receive support. A specialist parent support worker who speaks many of the children's home languages is employed to liaise with families and children.
- The passion and ambition of the leadership is shared with the highly effective early years team. The quality of provision is rigorously monitored to see what might be improved. Carefully chosen role-play areas and investigative science activities motivate all children and boys in particular. Staff ensure that safeguarding and welfare requirements appropriate to the early years are fully met and there are high levels of care.
- Pupil premium funding is used very effectively to identify and support the individual needs of disadvantaged children. As a result, they make similar progress to others.

School details

Unique reference number	140012
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10019843

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

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	707
Appropriate authority	The academy trust
Chair	Claudine Murray
Headteacher	Jane Troth
Telephone number	01843 227575
Website	www.cliftonvilleprimary.co.uk
Email address	headteacher@cliftonville.kent.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school and the roll is expanding.
- The large majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is above average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average.
- The proportion of pupils supported through the pupil premium funding is above average.
- Children attend the Nursery for a morning or afternoon session. Children attend full time in the Reception classes.
- The school provides daily breakfast and after-school clubs.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics.

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school complies with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish.
- The school became an academy on 1 December 2013 and is a part of the Coastal Academies Trust. The current substantive headteacher was appointed in September 2014.

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Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed teaching and learning in all classes. Some of these observations were conducted jointly with senior leaders.
- Inspectors talked to pupils about their work and looked at work in pupils' books.
- Inspectors observed pupils at playtime and lunchtime and asked them for their views on the school. They also talked to pupils about reading and listened to some pupils read.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher and deputy headteacher, governors, the executive headteacher of the Coastal Academy Trust, an external adviser and other staff with key leadership responsibilities.
- Inspectors looked at a wide range of documents including: the school's own check on its performance and the quality of teaching; the school improvement plan; information on pupils' progress; and records relating to attendance, behaviour and safeguarding.
- Inspectors looked at the 21 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, which included 17 written comments and spoke to some parents at the start of the school day. They also took account of the school's own parent survey conducted in June 2016 with 93 responses. Inspectors took account of 38 questionnaires returned by staff and 29 responses to the pupil questionnaire.

Inspection team

Margaret Coussins, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
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Jonathan Shields	Ofsted Inspector

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