

Inspection of Ethelbert Road Primary School

Ethelbert Road, Faversham, Kent ME13 8SQ

Inspection dates:	1 and 2 October 2024
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Outstanding
Early years provision	Outstanding
Previous inspection grade	Outstanding

Until November 2020, the school was exempt from routine inspection because it was judged as outstanding for overall effectiveness at its previous inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. The school has not been inspected under section 5 of the Act since September 2014.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are rightly very proud of their school and their achievements. They enjoy coming to this welcoming and friendly school and appreciate all aspects of school life. A group of pupils agreed that the school 'brightens your horizons'. There is an extremely calm, purposeful atmosphere with happy pupils in every class. Parents appreciate this, with one saying, 'Teachers and teaching assistants, along with the headteacher and deputy headteacher, create a welcoming environment, where children feel valued, heard, and are encouraged to be the best version of themselves.'

Pupils' well-being is paramount and as a result pupils feel safe. Staff know the pupils very well and there are strong and trusting relationships. Pupils know that staff will listen to them if they have any worries or concerns. Expectations are very high. All pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), are challenged to achieve their very best academically and personally.

Pupils are polite and kind. They look out for each other. Their behaviour and attitudes to learning are exemplary and consequently they achieve highly. Children in Reception settle exceptionally well. Older pupils are excellent role models for children starting school.

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

Children get an excellent start to their school life. By the end of Reception, they are well placed to continue their learning in Year 1. The school has a sharp focus on the development of children's speech, language and communication skills. The learning environment inside and outside supports the rapid development of early reading, writing and number skills effectively. Reading has high priority in the school. There is a relentless determination that all pupils will learn to read. Throughout the school, a real love of reading is promoted extremely well. Pupils develop as fluent, confident readers who read widely and frequently. Phonics skills are taught very effectively. In Reception, children quickly learn the sounds that letters make and read books that match the sounds they know. Pupils who might be at risk of falling behind are given additional help to catch up quickly.

The curriculum is rich and ambitious for all pupils, including those with SEND. Pupils achieve well. The school identifies the needs of pupils accurately. Appropriate adaptations and skilled support in lessons ensure that all pupils have equal opportunities to learn. Overall, the curriculum is very well designed. The essential skills, knowledge and vocabulary that pupils need to learn are identified and sequenced from Reception to Year 6. On occasion, however, in some curriculum subjects, the focus for learning in lessons is not as clear as it could be. As a result, pupils sometimes lack clarity about what they are learning in a specific subject, or what they have learned in the past.

Pupils conduct themselves exceptionally well in lessons, in the playground and around the school. They know and demonstrate the values of the school, which are happiness, respect, creativity, self-belief, curiosity and cooperation. These values shine through in pupils' attitudes to work and play. They prepare them well for later life. Pupils attend

regularly and are punctual to school. Pupils have a very strong sense of acceptance. They have an understanding of the differences between people from different backgrounds and with different needs.

The school is committed to ensuring that pupils' horizons and experiences are broadened. The school provides a range of visits, visitors to school and clubs, some of which pupils run at lunchtimes. There is a vast range of opportunities to enrich pupils' learning as well as develop their skills and talents. These opportunities are welcomed by parents and pupils.

Staff are exceptionally positive about the school. They appreciate the consideration given to their workload and well-being, as well as the opportunities to continue to enhance their skills and expertise. There is a very strong culture of mutual support and teamwork. Parents rightly agree. A few parents commented that they would appreciate even more opportunities to communicate and work with the school. Governors are exceptionally skilled and experienced. They share the school's vision for excellence. All leaders constantly check on the impact of the school's work for its pupils and work extremely well together to make any necessary changes.

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 curriculum subjects, the learning related to specific subjects within cross-curricular work is not clearly defined. As a result, pupils are not always clear about what they are learning or what they have learned. This means they are not always confident to draw on what they have been taught in order to help them with new learning. The school should ensure that subject-specific learning intentions are very clear so that pupils have clarity about what they are learning and why.

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	118337
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10341481
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	207
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Jonathan Richardson
Headteacher	Michele Kirkbride
Website	www.ethelbert-road.kent.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	30 September and 1 October 2014, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Information about this school

- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.

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.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors met with the headteacher and deputy headteacher, who is the special educational needs coordinator, other senior leaders, subject leaders and many staff.
- An inspector met with governors, including the chair of the governing body. She also held a telephone conversation with the local authority senior school improvement adviser.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, history and physical education. 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 examples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also discussed the curriculum in some other subjects.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, 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.

Inspection team

Margaret Coussins, lead inspector Ofsted Inspector

Kate Owbridge Ofsted Inspector

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