

Inspection of Manuden Primary School

The Street, Manuden, Bishop's Stortford, Hertfordshire CM23 1DE

Inspection dates: 10 and 11 January 2023

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

This school was last inspected twelve 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.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy school life. They are incredibly respectful to each other and to adults. Pupils have an excellent understanding of diversity and how others are different from themselves. The school has a 'family feel' where everyone looks out for each other. Older pupils, for example, take care of younger children on the playground at lunchtimes. Some have responsibilities as school councillors and safety monitors to ensure that pupils' voices are heard or to help improve the school. Pupils are happy and safe here.

Pupils behave really well. They know the school's three rules and expect each other to follow them. Many pupils report they have never experienced problems with other pupils. Bullying is very rare. If difficulties or poor behaviour arise, staff quickly deal with the situation. Classrooms are calm, focused environments where pupils enjoy their learning.

The school provides for pupils' wider development exceptionally well. A range of interesting and engaging trips, experiences and guest speakers complement the school's curriculum and help bring it to life. Musical performances, drama activities and a very well-considered personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) curriculum support pupils, and children in early years, to become confident, resilient individuals.

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

Leaders have designed a curriculum, from early years to Year 6, that is ambitious for all pupils. The curriculum is successfully adjusted and adapted to support mixed year group learning in this small school. Throughout the curriculum, key knowledge is identified and arranged in a logical order. This helps pupils build their understanding as they get older. In Reception Year, for example, well-considered activities support children's learning about number and shape. This readies them for mathematics in Year 1 and beyond so that, by Year 6, pupils are tackling tricky problems and making strong progress.

Curriculum documents contain key knowledge milestones which remind teachers what pupils should know and when. This helps teachers to plan their lessons. Regular checks are made to see what pupils have learned and where there are gaps in their understanding. On the whole, these assessments are used well. In a small number of instances, teachers do not use these checks well enough to find out what knowledge pupils are missing. Leaders' quality assurance has recently identified this issue, but improvements have yet to be made.

Teachers know about the needs of their pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Teachers often skilfully adapt their lessons for the mixed-year classes and different pupils' needs. As a result, many pupils, including those with SEND, progress and achieve well. Sometimes, teachers do not use what they know about pupils' needs to make the most helpful changes to

lessons or choose learning activities well. In these instances, learning is trickier for these pupils.

The reading curriculum is well considered throughout the school. It starts early in Reception Year. Well-trained adults help children in early years to learn their letters and sounds. Teachers choose a range of interesting books and texts to use throughout the curriculum. In Reception Year, for example, the 'superhero' books support children to think about how to be sensitive to others' needs. Pupils become confident readers that enjoy reading in class and at home. If any pupil falls behind with their reading, staff support them to catch up.

The expectation that pupils behave well is shown through pupils' good behaviour and attitudes to school life. Staff support pupils well in managing their emotions. In the Reception Year, staff take time to help children develop their speech. As a result, children confidently chat with each other and with adults about their learning or how they are feeling.

The school's values are the golden threads that tie together the wider curriculum. Each element, for example assemblies, trips and the PSHE curriculum, combines to give pupils an exceptional experience. A range of residential trips to promote independence and opportunities for pupils to debate different ideas also help to develop pupils' character. Leaders ensure that all pupils, regardless of ability or background, benefit from this approach.

Leaders and governors acted swiftly to steady the school during a recent, significant period of leadership change. Despite this added pressure, staff feel well looked after and are proud to be part of the school team. They work closely together to ensure that pupils are at the heart of the school's work. This is reflected through positive parental support. Every parent who responded to Ofsted's survey would recommend the school to others.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff are well trained to spot concerns about pupils. They know pupils well and can identify if a pupil is at risk. Pupils are confident to talk to staff about their worries. Any concern, no matter how small, is recorded clearly on the safeguarding system. Safeguarding leaders respond quickly and appropriately to safeguarding concerns. Records are detailed and show leaders use a range of different agencies to help pupils get the support they need.

Appropriate pre-employment checks are in place before staff join the school.

Staff ensure pupils know how to keep safe in the community and online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a small number of instances, teachers do not use the school's detailed assessment procedures effectively. In these cases, teachers do not have the most accurate understanding of what pupils know or can do. Leaders should ensure that teachers check regularly and effectively what pupils know in every subject.
- Sometimes, teachers do not make the most effective adaptations to what they teach to cater for all pupils' needs, including those with SEND. This is because they do not always use what they know about pupils consistently well. Consequently, pupils find learning more difficult than it should be. Leaders should support all teachers to make the right adaptations to lessons, so pupils make the best possible progress.

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	114979
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	10255040
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community school
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	92
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Sarah Turner
Headteacher	Andrew Price
Website	www.manudenprimary.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	17 March 2009, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Information about this school

- There have been significant changes to governance and leadership since February 2022.
- Between February 2022 and December 2022, an acting headteacher was in post.
- The current headteacher joined the school in January 2023.
- The chair of the governing body started her role in November 2022.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

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

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in the following subjects: reading, mathematics, geography and music. For each deep dive, the inspector met with subject leaders,

visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers and pupils about learning and looked at a sample of pupils' work.

- The lead inspector looked at a range of pupils' work across other subjects, including science and history.
- The lead inspector held meetings with representatives from the governing body.
- Inspectors met with a range of leaders, including the school's special educational needs coordinator.
- To inspect safeguarding, the lead inspector met with the school's safeguarding leader. Inspectors looked closely at safeguarding systems, processes and records. They spoke to pupils, staff and governors about safeguarding.
- The lead inspector considered the 40 responses made by parents to Ofsted Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, including 40 free-text responses. The lead inspector also considered the eight responses to Ofsted's online staff questionnaire and the 43 responses to Ofsted's pupil survey.

Inspection team

Damian Loneragan, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Kathryn Herlock	Ofsted Inspector

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