

# Inspection of a good school: Maylandsea Primary School

Katonia Avenue, Mayland, Chelmsford, Essex, CM3 6AD

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Inspection dates:

19 and 20 June 2024

## Outcome

Maylandsea Primary School continues to be a good school.

The headteacher of this school is Clare James. This school is part of The Eveleigh LINK Academy Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Joseph Figg, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Sara Kightley.

## What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils have boundless enthusiasm for learning at this school. They benefit from wide-ranging experiences linked to the curriculum. For example, building a pyramid as part of 'Egyptian day' or taking part in a mini-Olympics. There is something to spark interest in everyone.

Such enrichment opportunities and the use of the house system foster strong friendships and a team spirit. Pupils respect fairness, trying one's best and sharing so all benefit. Younger children take turns on the play equipment to ensure everyone can enjoy themselves. Older children undertake first aid training so they can one day help others if they need to. There are many ways for pupils to demonstrate leadership. For instance, as a play leader or as part of the school council. Pupils are proud of their fundraising and the success of their bid to purchase football goals for the school.

Staff show pupils how to be kind through their well-chosen words and manners. As parents expressed and fully appreciate, staff 'always put children first'. The school's caring ethos means pupils feel secure and happy. Pupils trust adults to deal with any issues should they arise.

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

The school uses two different curriculum models. One that caters for the mixed-age class and the other for the one form entry. Both are ambitious and well-planned. Staff plan carefully so that pupils can practically apply their learning. The use of real-life examples and creative resources are a strength of the delivery. As a result, pupils keenly engage in their learning experiences, demonstrating an appetite for knowing more.

Staff pay careful attention to pupils' starting points. This is so they can build upon what pupils know and can do. Teachers focus sharply on expanding pupils' vocabulary. They are raising expectations so that pupils improve the quality of their writing. Last year, higher attaining pupils did not achieve as well as they might in the national tests. This sharper focus as well as breaking down difficult concepts in mathematics is helping pupils understand what they need to do to reach the higher standards. However, teachers differ in their expectations of when they give pupils the opportunity to practise their reasoning and problem-solving in mathematics. On occasion, some pupils may not get on to the word problem task. For those that do, some may write their reasoning for their mathematical methods, others in another class may not. This means that some pupils are more confident than others when explaining methods and justifying the choices they make when problem-solving.

The school provides a rich reading environment. Pupils read an exciting and diverse range of texts. Pupils value the scheduled reading time in the day, especially when they can do so independently. Pupils quickly learn to read. This is because staff follow with fidelity the school's chosen phonics scheme. Pupils read books that match the sounds they know. The emphasis upon oral blending, putting the sounds together to make words, means pupils have the confidence to read unfamiliar words.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are well-served by the curriculum and its delivery. Staff know pupils exceptionally well. Pupils learn effectively as staff gently guide them out of their comfort zones to try something new. Staff's timely direction to use a workstation or safe space to learn helps pupils keep focus. Learning support assistants are adept at recognising when a pupil may become anxious. Their de-escalation strategies work successfully.

Children in early years, like many of their older peers, behave impeccably. They listen carefully to the teacher and other adults. The strong routines, clear instructions and purposeful interactions means that children are blossoming into confident and enthusiastic learners.

The school has a powerful holistic approach to personal development. There is a wide-ranging offer to develop pupils' understanding of diversity, faith and citizenship. The school's focus on their local community gives pupils a sense of belonging. Pupils learn how to look after themselves physically as well as mentally. For instance, pupils understand, in an age-appropriate way, how to stay safe online. The use of outdoor education and a full offer of clubs means that pupils have a well-rounded experience of school.

The trust and the school's governors provide strong strategic oversight of the school. They continue to drive for greater improvement, such as increasing pupils' rates of attendance for those who are persistently absent. The work here is having an impact but there is still more to do. Leaders take careful note of staff's workload and well-being. As a result, there is high morale at the school.

## Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

## What does the school need to do to improve?

### (Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Teachers inconsistently give pupils opportunities to practise their reasoning and problem-solving skills. Where pupils are adept at verbally explaining their choices and methods, they are less confident when doing so in their mathematical writing. Some pupils do not get enough practise of this element of mathematics. The school should ensure that it is clear in its expectations, so there is greater rigour in the teaching of problem solving and reasoning.
- Some pupils have irregular attendance. This leads to a disconnected learning experience as it disrupts the flow of learning the curriculum. The school should explore further the removal of barriers to pupil attendance. This includes working closely with parents so they can support improvements in their child's attendance where need be.

## Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. 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 good in January 2019.

## 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 special educational needs and/or disabilities (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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	142254
<b>Local authority</b>	Essex
<b>Inspection number</b>	10345413
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	241
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Sara Kightley
<b>Headteacher</b>	Clare James
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.maylandsea.essex.sch.uk">www.maylandsea.essex.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date(s) of previous inspection</b>	16 and 17 January 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The headteacher become the substantive headteacher in April 2022. Prior to this, she was head of school.
- The school does not currently use alternative provision.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in her evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with the chair of the trust, trustees, the chief executive officer of the trust, the chair of the local governing body and its representatives.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, senior leaders, subject leaders and staff.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: Reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive the inspector 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.

- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour in lessons, around school and at social times. She considered pupils' views about behaviour in school. She also spoke with staff about pupils' behaviour and staff's workload and well-being.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector 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 inspector considered responses to Ofsted's pupil and staff surveys. She considered responses to Ofsted Parent View, including free-text comments.

### **Inspection team**

Liz Smith, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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