

Inspection of Prettygate Infant School

Plume Avenue, Colchester, Essex CO3 4PH

Inspection dates: 18 and 19 October 2022

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Early years provision **Good**

Previous inspection grade Good

What is it like to attend this school?

The values of 'ambition, kindness and respect' are at the heart of Prettygate Infant School's offer. Pupils are kind to one another and enjoy each other's company. They learn and play happily together in this warm and welcoming school.

Pupils rise to the high expectations adults have of them. When children start in the Reception classes, they learn to become increasingly independent and understand how to take care of their surroundings and equipment. This continues as they move through the school. They learn about the differences between themselves and others and are consequently respectful of these differences.

Pupils behave well, both in lessons and around the school. Because pupils know how to be kind, bullying is rare. If it does happen, or if a pupil falls out with a friend, they know that adults will help them to make things better. Pupils trust adults to always be there for them.

Pupils enjoy taking part in clubs, such as gardening and art club, along with the opportunities to go on school trips and to help to raise money for local charities. In the school's own forest area, the youngest children are encouraged to build their resilience and to take carefully considered risks. These activities help pupils to be well prepared for their move to junior school.

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

Leaders have made significant improvements to the quality of education since the previous inspection. They have designed an ambitious curriculum. This lays out the important knowledge that pupils should know and remember as they move through the school. Leaders have made sure that the curriculum helps pupils build on what they already know. In many subjects, pupils develop detailed knowledge and deep understanding.

Teachers are well trained. This supports them to deliver the curriculum well. They have secure subject knowledge in many of the subjects they teach. This means that teachers correct pupils quickly if they misunderstand new ideas. In some subjects, pupils do not learn as well as they could because the activities teachers set for them do not always precisely match what they want pupils to learn.

Leaders have made reading a high priority. The relatively new phonics programme has brought more consistency in the way adults teach pupils to read. The programme helps to ensure that staff know precisely the sounds and words pupils need to be able to read and by when. This means they can quickly identify pupils who are not keeping up and provide them with additional support. Pupils, including those who need extra help, read books that allow them to practise the sounds they learn in class. This means pupils learn to read well.

Pupils behave well in lessons. They listen carefully to adults and one another. Children learn how to behave when they start school in Reception. In the playground, pupils share equipment from the 'play pod' and play together well. Some pupils need extra support to help them to manage their behaviour. Where this is the case, adults support these pupils effectively.

The programme to promote pupils' personal development helps them to understand the wider world in which they live. Many of the 'super seven' books that teachers share regularly with pupils include themes such as tolerance, equality and inclusion. The election of the pupils' learning council helps pupils to understand the principles of democracy. Pupils who serve on the learning council are proud to do so.

Children's first experience of school when they join in Reception is positive. The indoor and outdoor spaces are delightful places in which children can learn. They make friends quickly because they are taught how to be kind and caring to each other. Adults know the importance of children developing their language at this young age. They are skilled at helping children to learn and use new words in their conversations. Adults check systematically to make sure that children remember their new knowledge. The regular special events, such as The Little Red Hen Day and The Hedgehog's Birthday Party, are not only fun for children, but help adults check that children remember what they have been taught through the term.

The needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are well met. Adults expect pupils with SEND to access the same ambitious curriculum as their peers. Where needed, careful adaptations are made to help these pupils learn and to develop their social skills.

Governors support leaders well. They ask questions to make sure they understand how well pupils are learning, and challenge leaders to make aspects of the school's provision even better. Until recently, there have been gaps in the knowledge of governors. Some of the required checks on governors were only completed recently. Governors were not aware that they were previously incomplete.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Pupils are safe in school. There is a culture of vigilance. Staff are well trained to spot the signs that a pupil may need extra help. Leaders know pupils and their families well, which means they can provide additional support. They work closely with external agencies when this is needed.

Checks that must be made on adults working in school are thorough. Leaders keep detailed records of these checks. Pupils know how to stay safe. They know about ways to keep safe when using the internet, such as not sharing personal information with people they do not know.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a small number of subjects, some activities that teachers set are not precisely designed to help pupils learn the intended curriculum. In these subjects, pupils do not achieve as highly as they could. Leaders should ensure that they provide any further training so that teachers are supported to implement leaders' aspirational curriculum consistently well across all subjects.
- Until recently, some governors did not have a clear enough understanding of their roles and responsibilities. As a result, the governing body is not as well equipped as it could be to hold school leaders to account. Governors should consider any further training needed to ensure that all governors understand how to carry out their roles effectively, so that they continue to improve and sustain the quality of the provision.

How 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	114744
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	10240983
Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	5 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	156
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Linda Gildea
Headteacher	Mark Millbourne
Website	www.prettygateschools.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	1 and 2 October 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The headteacher is also the headteacher of Prettygate Junior School. The deputy headteacher and other leaders work across both the infant and junior school.
- The infant and junior school have one governing body.

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. 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 these subjects: reading, mathematics, science and history. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The lead inspector listened to pupils from Years 1 and 2 read to an adult.

- Inspectors evaluated the curriculum plans and spoke to leaders and pupils about several other subjects.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, special educational needs coordinator, the early years leader, learning support assistants and midday assistants. The lead inspector held a meeting with members of the governing body and a meeting with a representative of the local authority.
- To inspect safeguarding, inspectors scrutinised the single central record, reviewed safeguarding paperwork and systems. The inspector spoke with leaders, teachers, support staff, governors and pupils to evaluate the culture of safeguarding in school.
- Inspectors considered the 50 responses and free-text comments to Ofsted Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire for parents and carers, along with the 23 responses to Ofsted's questionnaire for staff.

Inspection team

Nathan Lowe, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Michael Thomas

Ofsted Inspector

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