

Inspection of a school judged outstanding for overall effectiveness before September 2024: Chilton Primary School

Chilton Lane, Ramsgate, Kent CT11 0LQ

Inspection dates:

3 and 4 June 2025

Outcome

Chilton Primary School has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

The head of school is Alex McAuley. This school is part of Viking 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 (CEO), Michaela Lewis, who is also the executive headteacher, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Neil Roby.

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a school that places no limits on what pupils can achieve, both academically and personally. Exceptionally kind and respectful relationships between staff and pupils are the hallmark of daily routines. Around school, pupils share cheerful smiles and waves with friends and staff, creating a welcoming and inclusive community where they feel safe. Pupils' impeccable behaviour, highly positive attitudes to learning and strong social and collaborative skills contribute to this uplifting atmosphere.

Each morning, pupils arrive with enthusiasm, eager to begin their day. As part of 'wake and shake', they literally dance happily, to music, into school. This sets a joyful tone for learning. The school fosters a deep love of learning, which is reflected in pupils' high attendance rates. Across subjects, pupils excel academically and achieve exceptionally well. They are very well prepared for the next stage of their education.

From the early years, children are eager learners who engage positively with their friends and staff. Pupils contribute extensively to their school community through leadership roles, such as 'thrive ambassadors' and sports leaders. They recognise the value of these responsibilities and how they help make the school an even better place. A palpable ethos of care and teamwork pervades here.

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

The school has established an ambitious and high-quality standard of education. Reading is the bedrock of its exceptional curriculum. Children in Reception Year get off to a swift start, building strong reading foundations early on. Staff foster a vibrant reading culture, using diverse and thought-provoking texts to deepen learning across subjects. Staff deliver the phonics programme with precision. They teach and model sounds expertly. Staff provide effective support for those pupils who need additional help. They carefully select books to match pupils' phonics knowledge and reinforce their love for reading. As pupils learn phonics, they learn how to form letters. They write and spell with accuracy. Over time, they grow into expressive, articulate writers and confident, accurate readers.

The school provides a well-structured and interesting curriculum that builds pupils' knowledge progressively. It sets out precisely the important knowledge and skills pupils should learn. Staff know exactly what pupils need to learn and remember. There is a deliberate focus on developing pupils' subject specific vocabulary, and staff emphasise this routinely. This begins in the early years, where children's foundational knowledge is established exceptionally well. Children's early learning in early language and mathematics equips them well for future learning.

Staff use their excellent subject knowledge to present and model new learning precisely. They design engaging activities that not only bring the curriculum to life but also deepen pupils' understanding. Staff provide ample time for pupils to practise and apply their learning. They skilfully check what pupils know and remember, adjusting the curriculum effectively to address any misunderstandings. Staff provide clear feedback, which helps pupils to improve their work. They quickly identify and meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Staff use a suitable range of resources, including technology, to support these pupils to learn well. As a result, pupils achieve highly.

The school's provision for pupils' personal development is exceptional. A broad range of trips and experiences enrich pupils' interests and nurture their talents. Pupils develop a strong sense of positive citizenship. For example, they plant bulbs and litter-pick in the local area and support charities and contribute to the food bank. Pupils gain a deep understanding of environmental issues, such as erosion and plastic pollution. They are highly knowledgeable about the fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law and tolerance.

Pupils demonstrate exemplary attitudes towards learning, following school routines with confidence and maturity. Classrooms are calm and peaceful. This is because mutual respect defines the strong relationships between staff and pupils. This stems from 'The Chilton Way,' which is firmly embedded in every aspect of daily life.

Similarly, behaviour is excellent at social times, with pupils taking responsibility for themselves and others. Pupils engage enthusiastically in a wide range of activities, including ball games, playing on the trim trail, the climbing wall and imaginative play or

den building in the wooded area. Older pupils support younger children exceptionally well, fostering warm relationships across all ages.

Trustees and local governors have a precise understanding of the school's strengths and development priorities. They provide effective challenge and accountability to the school. Staff feel valued and take pride in working in an environment that places pupils' success front and centre. They appreciate the strong support they receive, particularly regarding their well-being. Parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive. They recognise the dedication of staff and appreciate the rich opportunities that help their children to thrive.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Background

Until September 2024, on a graded (section 5) inspection we gave schools an overall effectiveness grade, in addition to the key and provision judgements. Overall effectiveness grades given before September 2024 will continue to be visible on school inspection reports and on Ofsted's website. From September 2024, graded inspections will not include an overall effectiveness grade. This school was, before September 2024, judged outstanding for its overall effectiveness.

We have now inspected the school to determine whether it has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at that previous inspection. 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's work has improved significantly or that it may not be as strong as it was at the last inspection, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection. A graded inspection 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 outstanding for overall effectiveness 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

Unique reference number	141766
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10321996
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	419
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Neil Roby
CEO of the trust	Michaela Lewis
Headteacher	Alex McAuley (head of school)
Website	www.chiltonprimary.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	9 and 10 January 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of Viking Academy Trust. Beneath the board of trustees, there is a local advisory body (LAB) of governors specifically focused on Chilton Primary School. While retaining overall accountability, the board of trustees delegates many responsibilities and governance functions to the LAB. The chair of the board of trustees is also the chair of the LAB.
- The head of school took up his post in September 2023.
- The school offers a breakfast club and an after-school club.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- 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. The inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with the head of school, other senior and curriculum leaders, staff and pupils. She met with trustees, including the chair and representatives of the LAB. The inspector also met with the CEO, the director of education and chief finance and operations officer from the trust.
- The inspector visited a sample of lessons, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- 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 the responses to Ofsted's confidential staff survey and spoke to a range of staff about their views of the school.
- The inspector took account of the responses to the Ofsted Parent View questionnaire, including the free-text responses.
- The inspector met with a range of pupils to discuss their views about the school and talked to pupils informally during social times and in lessons. They also took account of the responses from Ofsted's pupil survey.
- The inspector reviewed a range of the school's documents, including the school development plan and self-evaluation report, minutes of LAB and board of trustee meetings and behaviour incident logs.

Inspection team

Louise Walker, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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