

Inspection of The Flich Green Academy

Tanton Road, Little Dunmow, Dunmow, Essex CM6 3GG

Inspection dates: 8 and 9 October 2024

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Early years provision **Good**

Previous inspection grade Good

The principal of this school is Alex Burden. The school is the only school in the Flich Green Academy trust. The trust is overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Carly Bucknell.

Since September 2024, schools have not been awarded an overall effectiveness grade.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy coming to school. They say that staff welcome them with kindness every day. Pupils feel well supported as they develop academically and personally. They appreciate opportunities to contribute and improve aspects of the school. They can help as librarians, members of the school parliament and eco-warriors. Older pupils are being well prepared to take their next steps to secondary school. Teachers challenge them to work more independently and to develop greater resilience.

Pupils are safe at school. They understand the importance of respecting other people. Pupils recognise the difference between falling out with a friend and bullying. They report that bullying is a rarity. Pupils have complete confidence that teachers will deal with any incidents quickly.

Poor behaviour seldom interrupts learning. From the early years, pupils learn to follow routines. Typically, pupils engage well with their work. Staff have high expectations of everyone's achievement and behaviour. These expectations are increasingly realised. Parents and carers are pleased with the community feel of the school.

The school is working effectively in order to develop pupils' character. They know, for example, how to be a 'cracking citizen'. This promotes pupils' kindness, politeness and responsibility.

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

The school prioritises reading. Pupils learn to read from the very start of the Reception Year. Staff are adept at modelling language. They seek opportunities to reinforce children's learning of sounds and new words. The phonics programme is well embedded. Staff are well trained. Consequently, the programme is delivered confidently and consistently. The school gives effective help for any pupils who might fall behind. Pupils use phonics strategies well when they are decoding words. They take home a reading book each week to practise the sounds they have learned in class.

The school has worked effectively in order to develop a culture of reading for pleasure. Older pupils enjoy the texts they share in class as well as visits to the school library. Pupils are keen to read a certain amount to become 'word millionaires'. Staff have identified the key vocabulary that pupils should learn in each subject from the Reception Year through to Year 6. In history, pupils are developing their understanding of terms such as 'chronology' and 'monarchy'. The school has developed a curriculum for writing. This is beginning to impact positively on the fluency and accuracy of pupils' written work.

The curriculum is well sequenced across subjects. There are opportunities for pupils to revisit important concepts. These build in complexity as pupils mature. In physical education, for example, pupils gain a secure understanding of tackling. They progress to learning about the principles of defending. Next, pupils apply this knowledge to different sports, such as football and hockey. Staff use a range of effective adaptations to support

pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). These pupils access the same curriculum as their peers. Pupils with SEND are achieving increasingly well.

The curriculum anticipates where pupils may have misconceptions. Teachers check pupils' understanding systematically. In a few subjects, the curriculum is not yet fully embedded. Following changes to the curriculum, staff are still in the process of developing their subject knowledge. Where this content is new, it is difficult for the school to assess the impact on pupils' development of knowledge and skills. Sometimes, pupils find it difficult to recall elements of important subject content.

The school is tenacious in its work to improve behaviour and attendance. Typically, pupils engage well with staff and with their learning. They are polite and friendly. This includes children in the early years. However, the school still has work to do to raise pupils' overall attendance. They have made a strong start on this by improving the attendance of those pupils who are frequently absent from school.

Pupils benefit from a carefully planned personal, social, health and economic education curriculum. They learn about important topics such as how to keep themselves safe. They enjoy developing their team-building skills and social skills through residential visits to Mersea and the Isle of Wight. They take part in a range of competitive sporting activities. Many pupils attend clubs before and after school. They value the rewards they receive for excellent work and behaviour, such as certificates and wristbands.

There have been many positive changes to the school in recent times. Staff feel that they have had a voice in these changes. They appreciate enhanced opportunities to discuss the curriculum. This has made their workload more manageable. All staff have had opportunities to develop professionally. They value the networking events organised by a local educational partnership. Governors are effective in their support and challenge of the school. They visit regularly to ensure that the education offered by staff has a positive impact on all its pupils.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Teachers are developing their subject knowledge and getting used to delivering new curriculum content. This means that they are only just beginning to identify where there are gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding of important subject content. The school should ensure that they continue to develop staff subject knowledge and expertise so that they can implement the new curriculum with confidence.
- Some pupils have not yet secured the knowledge they need to become confident writers. This becomes a barrier and prevents them from achieving highly. The school

should ensure that the writing curriculum includes the foundational knowledge that pupils need to become fluent writers.

- Work on whole-school absence is not yet having a significant impact. This means that a proportion of pupils are regularly missing out on vital education. The school should continue to develop its processes to address patterns of poor attendance and formalise support where needed to increase overall rates of attendance.

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	136441
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	10345299
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	261
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of Board of trustees	Carly Bucknell
Principal	Alex Burden
Website	www.theflitchgreenacademy.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	11 and 12 July 2023, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- This school is part of a single-academy trust: the Flitch Green Academy trust.
- The school has a breakfast and after-school club.

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 judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.

- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with leaders and staff in the school, including those responsible for the quality of education, behaviour, attendance, personal development, safeguarding and early years.
- Inspectors met with members of the governing body. They also spoke to a representative from the local authority and a headteacher from the Dunmow Excellence in Education Partnership.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives into early reading, history, mathematics 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 samples 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 inclusive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors looked at responses to Ofsted's online pupil, staff and parent surveys.

Inspection team

Lisa Strong, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Rebecca McCutcheon	Ofsted Inspector
Sarah Merritt	Ofsted Inspector

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