

# Inspection of a good school: Moulsham Infant School

Princes Road, Chelmsford, Essex CM2 9DG

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Inspection dates:

25 and 26 April 2023

## Outcome

Moulsham Infant School continues to be a good school.

## What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils benefit from the caring ethos of nurture and support in school. They respond well to this. Pupils behave well and concentrate on their learning. This prepares pupils well for the next stage in their education. Pupils are motivated learners. They participate enthusiastically in the activities that teachers plan for them. They are confident to talk about their learning.

Pupils embody the school values of 'independence, curiosity, ambition, resilience and empathy (ICARE)'. Pupils are proud of their learning and aim to be the 'best they can be'.

Pupils understand what bullying is. On the rare occasions bullying happens, pupils know adults will deal with it quickly so that it stops and does not reoccur. Pupils are regularly reminded of 'The Moulsham Code'. This ensures that leaders' high expectations for behaviour are seen throughout the school.

Pupils are polite and respectful to adults and each other. Relationships are strong. At breaktimes, the pupils play nicely together. They have fun while sharing the many playground activities. Pupils feel safe in school. They know how to keep themselves safe in and out of school, as well as when online.

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

Leaders have constructed a curriculum that goes beyond the expectations of the national curriculum. Pupils enjoy learning the broad range of subjects offered. Leaders have clarified exactly what pupils must know and when teachers should review what has previously been taught. This is from the early years to the end of Year 2. Teachers have secure subject knowledge and teach the curriculum well. They consistently check what pupils have learned. This knowledge is used to plan pupils' next steps in learning. Any gaps or misconceptions are quickly identified and addressed. As a result, most pupils remember what they have been taught. Consequently, pupils remember what they have learned well across the curriculum.

Leaders have made reading a high priority. However, previously a few pupils did not learn to read as well as they should. To address this, leaders introduced a new phonics programme in September 2022. All staff have received high-quality training to ensure a consistent approach to teaching of early reading across the school. Pupils are taught to read as soon as they start school. Teachers ensure the pupils' reading books are matched to their phonics knowledge. This is developing pupils' reading fluency and confidence. Pupils enjoy their teachers reading to them. This is developing pupils' love of reading.

Leaders ensure that disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are well supported across the curriculum. Staff quickly identify when pupils show signs of difficulties. When concerns arise, leaders ensure that pupils swiftly receive effective support. Staff support enables these pupils to be fully included in learning the curriculum. Parents of pupils with SEND appreciate the support their children receive in school.

Pupils behave well. Any low-level disruption is dealt with effectively by staff. Pupils like to achieve the behaviour reward of a 'cube in the jar' for their class. Once full, this leads to a reward that is enjoyed by the whole class. Most pupils enjoy and attend school regularly. However, there are some pupils who do not attend school as regularly as they should. These high rates of persistent absence means that, too often, these pupils miss out on important learning.

Leaders promote pupils' development and welfare effectively. Pupils respond well to the opportunities they are given. Pupils learn to respect British values, such as tolerance and democracy. For example, they learn about democracy by electing their class representative on the school council. Pupils also learn to value other people's differences. Pupils in Year 1 and 2 build confidence and learn how to understand their own emotions through weekly mindfulness coaching.

Pupils, staff and governors are proud of their school. The members of the governing body challenge and support school leaders effectively. Governors carry out their statutory duties well. Governors have an accurate understanding of the quality of education provided. They know where further improvements can be made.

Staff love working at Moulsham Infant School. They feel valued and supported. They know leaders care about their well-being and workload. Leaders place a high emphasis on continued professional development for all staff. Staff appreciate this as it supports their teaching across the curriculum.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure that all staff are well trained and are alert to signs that a child may be at risk of potential harm. Staff pass any concerns on promptly to leaders. Leaders act quickly to get the support needed for pupils and their families. Leaders work well with outside agencies to ensure that vulnerable pupils get the support they need.

Leaders and governors carry out all the required checks to ensure that adults are suitable to work in schools.

Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe. Pupils know trusted adults they can go to if they have a worry.

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

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

- A small number of pupils need additional support to catch up with their reading. Leaders need to ensure that the new phonics programme, plus any additional support put in place, ensures that pupils catch up as quickly as possible.
- Some pupils are persistently absent from school. As a result, these pupils miss out on the high-quality teaching of the curriculum and therefore have gaps in their knowledge. Leaders should continue to review and monitor their strategies to reduce persistent absences further and ensure pupils catch up on missed learning.

## **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 second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in May 2017.

## **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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	136855
<b>Local authority</b>	Essex
<b>Inspection number</b>	10268470
<b>Type of school</b>	Infant
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	326
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Beth Aspinall
<b>Headteacher</b>	Jane Landa-Arrese
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.moulsham-inf.essex.sch.uk">www.moulsham-inf.essex.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	31 October 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- A new headteacher has been appointed since the previous inspection.
- School leaders use one registered alternative provision.

## Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in this evaluation of the school.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and computing. For each deep dive, the inspector discussed the curriculum with leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The inspector listened to some pupils read to a familiar adult.
- The inspector spoke with leaders and pupils about several other subjects.
- To inspect safeguarding, the inspector scrutinised the single central record, reviewed safeguarding documentation and systems. The inspector spoke with leaders, teachers,

support staff, members of the governing body, and pupils to evaluate the culture of safeguarding in school.

- The inspector considered 62 responses to Ofsted's questionnaire for parents, Ofsted Parent View. They also considered 29 responses to the questionnaire for staff.

### **Inspection team**

Julie Winwood, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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