

**CONSULTANCY REPORT FOR
GREAT CLACTON
CHURCH of ENGLAND
JUNIOR SCHOOL**

Name of School:	Great Clacton Church of England Junior School
Headteacher/Principal:	Karen Jones
Hub:	Challenger Hub
School type:	Junior
MAT (if applicable):	The Diocese of Chelmsford Vine Schools Trust

Date of this visit:	26/05/2021
Estimate at last QA Review:	This the school's first Challenge Partners experience
Date of last QA Review:	N/A
Grade at last Ofsted inspection:	Good
Date of last Ofsted inspection:	07/12/2016

1. Information about the visit

In place of a QA Review, Great Clacton Church of England Junior School was visited by a Lead Reviewer who spent two days reviewing the following area with them:

- Leadership at all levels.

2. Information about the school

Great Clacton Church of England Junior School is an average sized junior school. It converted to academy status in March 2014, sponsored by the Diocese of Chelmsford Vine Schools Trust.

The proportion of disadvantaged pupils in the school is significantly above the national average. The proportion of pupils for whom English is an additional language is below the national average, as is the proportion from minority ethnic groups. Almost all pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is broadly in line with the national average, while those with an education, health and care plan is above.

The headteacher and her deputy have established a new vision for the school and the senior leadership team (SLT) has been re-structured to drive forward school improvement.

3.1 Leadership at all levels – What went well

- The headteacher and her deputy are extremely experienced senior leaders. They have masterminded a re-structuring of the senior leadership team, which has seen the addition of the Upper and Lower Key Stage phase leaders onto the SLT. Together, the newly-formed SLT are leading a thriving school where pupils blossom and flourish.
- In conjunction with the changes in the SLT, a new school vision has been established - 'Let your light shine,' a direct quotation from Matthew 5:14-16. This is shared and demonstrated by all staff and pupils and is entirely in keeping with the school's church connections and its Christian ethos.
- Many of the school's subject leaders are relatively new to post. In discussion, all voiced how they value the support they receive from the SLT and the Trust, in

particular through the 'Introduction to Leadership' course. This has helped them to understand the demands and requirements of a middle leadership role and they are growing well into their new responsibilities. These have been shrewd appointments and continue a clear succession plan for leaders in the school. As one senior leader stated, 'we now have round pegs in round holes!'

- Subject leaders demonstrate an infectious passion and enthusiasm for their subjects. Through their in-depth subject knowledge, they possess a collective understanding of the requirements of their areas and talk informatively about the rationale and intent behind their subjects. They relate with authority how their curricula contribute to the overall school vision and, in turn, how this supports its Christian values.
- Subject leaders exhibit drive and ambition for their subjects. This was especially evident in discussion with the forest school leader. By introducing this area onto the curriculum with a 'softly, softly' approach, through a series of 'taster' sessions for each year group, it has been met with unrivalled success. Should the leader's plans for the future come to fruition, this area has the potential to be a major strength of the school.
- The disadvantaged group constitutes almost half of the pupil population. These pupils are fortunate to receive highly positive support from the knowledgeable deputy headteacher, who is responsible for overseeing their learning. Curriculum adaptations such as bespoke interventions ensure that they make significant progress from their starting points, often exceeding that of their non-disadvantaged peers. The difference in attainment between the two groups is also diminishing rapidly.
- The newly appointed SENDco relishes the challenge of her new role. She acknowledges the invaluable support she receives from senior leaders and other school staff, which has helped her to establish a holistic approach to the provision for pupils with SEND. They, too, make strong progress from their entry points.
- The Family Liaison Worker provides invaluable support and assistance to the many vulnerable families with pupils at the school. She goes the extra mile to help them in whatever way she can. Her work was much appreciated during lockdown. The provision was highly effective in ensuring that these pupils were provided with everything they needed to continue their learning and not fall behind. For example, because domestic issues outside school were swiftly reduced, this calmed any anxieties these pupils had so that they were able to concentrate on their learning.
- Pupils love their school and are very proud of its reputation. They have a rich understanding of the school's vision and, when asked how they thought it is manifested, stated, 'it allows you to express yourself and follow your dream' and 'God is like our light to the world.' They have a number of roles and

responsibilities in school, and they would like more! There is scope to offer further leadership opportunities in the future.

3.2 Leadership at all levels – Even better if...

- ...the new senior leaders were given increasingly more opportunities to develop their strategic input.
- ...subject leaders were more accurately and sharply focused on the impact of their actions.
- ...subject leaders were able to express their curriculum rationale and intent more succinctly.
- ...pupils had more opportunities to adopt leadership roles in school.

4. What additional support would the school like from the Challenge Partners network, either locally or nationally?

Leaders are currently happy with the support they receive.

This visit will support the school's continuing improvement. The main findings will be shared within the school's hub in order that it can inform future activities.