



QUALITY ASSURANCE REVIEW

REVIEW REPORT FOR GREAT CLACTON CHURCH OF ENGLAND JUNIOR SCHOOL

Name of School:	Great Clacton Church of England Junior School
Headteacher/Principal:	Karen Jones Executive headteacher Tara Finney Head of school
Hub:	Challenger
School phase:	Junior
MAT (if applicable):	Diocese of Chelmsford Vine Schools Trust (MAT)

Overall Peer Evaluation Estimate at this QA Review:	Effective
Date of this Review:	23/02/2022
Overall Estimate at last QA Review	Not applicable as the school received a consultancy visit
Date of last QA Review	26/05/2021
Grade at last Ofsted inspection:	Good
Date of last Ofsted inspection:	08/11/2016

1. Context and character of the school

Great Clacton Church of England Junior School is a 7-11 school located in Clacton-on-Sea, Essex. The school is an average-sized junior school. The school joined the Diocese of Chelmsford Vine Schools Trust in March 2014. The school has an executive headteacher and a head of school. The executive headteacher supports another local school within the trust.

The aim of Great Clacton Church of England School is to provide a safe, secure and happy environment where every child is valued for their individuality. The vision for each member of the school stems from Matthew 5:14-16 '*You are the light of the world*' and '*let your light shine*'. The core Christian values of Faith, Forgiveness, Hope, Integrity, Love and Respect underpin the school community.

Almost all pupils are White British, with a small number from a range of minority ethnic backgrounds. The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is significantly above the national average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is above the national average and increasing. The proportion of pupils at an early stage of speaking English as an additional language is below the national average.

2.1 Leadership at all levels - What went well

- The executive headteacher and the head of school have been uncompromising in establishing a new vision for the school. The school's vision encompassing '*let your light shine*' is clearly evident in the lives of pupils at Great Clacton. The curriculum supports pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development extremely well. Pupils are reflective about their own beliefs that inform their perspective on life. They show a keen interest in and respect for different people's faiths, feelings and values. They recognise the difference between right and wrong and readily apply this understanding to their own lives. In an assembly, pupils discussed the importance of integrity and what this meant to them personally.
- The executive headteacher and the head of school have created a strong team and ensured that the right people are in the right roles. Their drive and ambition are shared by staff and governors. Senior leaders have the highest possible aspirations for all staff and pupils. They constantly strive to improve all aspects of the school for the pupils' benefit. Every pupil is valued as an individual and cared for exceptionally well.
- Senior leaders ensure that members of the newly established wider leadership team have the opportunity to develop their leadership skills. For example, phase leaders have undertaken the NPQML course and a course for Church School

Leaders.

- The school is outward-looking and collaborates very effectively with other schools within the Vine community. Leaders draw on the continuing professional development (CPD) programme that is provided by the trust. Leaders are also more than happy to say no to CPD opportunities and/or collaboration if they do not enhance the lives of Great Clacton pupils.
- Senior leaders have an accurate view of the school's strengths. They are honest about areas for further improvement. School improvement planning reflects information gleaned from robust monitoring and evaluation processes, showing the unwavering commitment to further continuous improvement.
- The chair of the local schools board (LSB) knows and understands the specific needs of the school community very well. The LSB works closely with the local community. This enables the LSB to respond to any concerns swiftly and to maintain strong and positive relationships with parents.
- The curriculum is enriched by music, art, sport, outdoor learning and visits. For example, the active Forest School provides pupils with the opportunity to develop themselves in an inquisitive manner and have a positive relationship with the natural world.
- Leaders ensure that staff are provided with an extensive information profile for each pupil. This includes any identified specific additional support measures which enable leaders and staff to provide appropriate interventions for different pupil groups, including those pupils who are disadvantaged and those with SEND.

2.2 Leadership at all levels - Even better if...

...senior leaders continued to provide high quality professional development opportunities for middle leaders in order to equip them with the leadership skills necessary to check and improve the quality of teaching and learning in their areas of responsibility.

...leaders fine-tuned the narrative regarding the impact of key strategies on pupil outcomes.

3.1 Quality of provision and outcomes - What went well

- A key feature of the school's work is to inspire in pupils the need to contribute positively to life in modern Britain. To this end, staff are successful and provide excellent role models in their everyday interactions with pupils.
- The rich curriculum enables pupils to experience a range of opportunities that help them to shape their aspirations for later life. The curriculum has been re-designed to better encompass the vision and values of the school. Subject sequencing and curriculum mapping enable powerful knowledge to be taught

through 'Big Questions' that are interwoven with Christian teachings. This allows pupils to link key themes and concepts together.

- Pupils are encouraged to think about their role in the world and the impact of their actions. They speak knowledgeably about climate change and their concerns for future generations. Older pupils discuss geographical diversity across the world. Pupils attend a five-day residential trip to the Isle of Wight and develop a better understanding of the natural world.
- Leaders have adopted aspects of the White Rose scheme for mathematics. Thoughtful planning provides many opportunities for pupils to build fluency and reasoning skills. Pupils are frequently required to apply these skills to solve problems.
- In science, pupils develop lines of enquiry based on observations and make predictions using scientific knowledge and understanding. They use appropriate techniques, apparatus, and materials during practical investigations. In one lesson, pupils were excited to be constructing their own miniature parachutes to investigate the relationship between gravity and air resistance.
- Leaders work closely with the neighbouring infant school to ensure phonics assessments are shared and interventions can be correctly targeted for those pupils transferring to Great Clacton in Year 3. A focus on specific comprehension skills is helping pupils to further develop their reading for meaning and oral comprehension techniques.
- Pupils are proud of their academic work and this is reflected in the quality of the presentation of work in exercise books. They also take great care of the school buildings and the colourful learning environment.
- Teachers often lead back and forth interaction, including questioning, short tasks, explanation, demonstration, and discussion. They ask questions to ensure pupils have really got to grips with the topic at-hand and encourage pupils to 'explain what you mean'.
- Pupils' skills are assessed each term in order to identify any gaps in learning and to identify those pupils with higher learning potential (HLP). This supports the school's drive to stretch and challenge the most able pupils.
- Teachers and learning support staff work well together, and give timely and constructive advice to pupils. This ensures that pupils with SEND have the support that they need.

3.2 Quality of provision and outcomes - Even better if...

...teachers challenged all groups of pupils, all of the time.

...pupils were able to articulate confidently what they are learning and why, thereby understanding their learning journey.

4.1 Quality of provision and outcomes for disadvantaged pupils and pupils with additional needs - What went well

- The leadership of the provision and outcomes for disadvantaged pupils, pupils with SEND and vulnerable pupils is strong. These pupils achieve exceedingly well given their individual starting points. The senior team, including the SENCO, has extensive experience and knowledge of vulnerable groups of pupils.
- On joining Great Clacton, all pupils are assessed for their mathematical skills, reading, reading comprehension, spelling ages and their phonics baseline information, where appropriate. These assessments are repeated incrementally throughout the pupils' time at the school. In addition, leaders closely analyse performance data of specific groups, such as SEND and disadvantaged pupils, each term in order to recognise progress and identify gaps in learning. This information is then used to determine the focus areas for additional support.
- Leaders have created zones of regulation to help pupils to regulate their emotions. A well-being hub has been developed in the main school building. Additional break-out spaces provide pupils with flexibility and enable pupils to work on their own or as part of a group.
- Extensive CPD is central to ensuring that the school has inclusive classrooms. All staff have received high quality CPD for SEND through internal and external opportunities. These include Essex STEPS training, trauma perceptive practice training and physiotherapist advice.
- Pupils' reading levels are accurately assessed. Additional texts have been purchased so that pupils have access to a wide range of texts. Leaders have invested in resources that boost pupils' learning, such as laptops and e-tablets. Extensive use is made of Lexia to address gaps in pupils' reading and spelling.
- Leaders deploy a range of strategies to support disadvantaged pupils whose learning has been disrupted as a result of the pandemic. For example, additional structured one-to-one and small group interventions are supporting those pupils who need extra help with mathematics or literacy. Leaders subsidise all curriculum-based school trips for all pupils deemed vulnerable.
- The pandemic has led to an increase in the incidence of social, emotional and mental health issues in both pupils and their families. A full-time learning mentor has been employed to support the social and emotional well-being of pupils. A children and families worker is working with families to support joined-up home/school pastoral intervention. This has led to a reduction in the rate of persistent absence amongst pupils.

4.2 Quality of provision and outcomes for disadvantaged pupils and pupils with additional needs - Even better if...

...teachers continued to adapt classroom learning in order to meet the needs of disadvantaged pupils and those pupils with SEND consistently across all areas of the curriculum.

5. Area of Excellence

Physical education (PE) and sports provision

Accredited

5.1 Why has this area been identified as a strength? What actions has the school taken to establish expertise in this area?

The school has two full-time sports coaches. They teach physical education (PE) across the school ensuring that all pupils have access to two hours of high-quality PE and sports coaching each week. One hour of this enables teachers to work specifically with disadvantaged pupils addressing any gaps in learning. In addition, coaches run after-school clubs for pupils that are free of charge. Many more pupils participate in sporting tournaments and events over the year.

The sports coaches provide mentoring for pupils. This has taken the form of reading to and with pupils, as well as being positive male role models. Coaches support those pupils who sometimes find it difficult to attend school because of emotional and mental health issues. Pupils are taught self-regulation techniques which might include movement breaks and check-ins throughout the day.

Each week, additional PE sessions are provided for pupils with SEND and those identified with HLP. A sophisticated assessment system has been developed to track pupils' progress and information is shared with class teachers.

The coaches have provided CPD for school staff and for other schools within the Trust. They provide advice on classroom resources and equipment. Support is provided for work experience students in developing their early careers within a school setting.

5.2 What evidence is there of the impact on pupils' outcomes?

Pupils understand that learning to play sports as a child might carry over into being a more active adult. They develop a knowledge of how being healthy impacts on their



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lifestyles. As well as increasing stamina and strength, pupils are more able to concentrate in the classroom. Improvements are evident in pupils' self-esteem and a reduction in pupil depression and anxiety.

The benefits of being part of a team improve social interaction and cohesion. Pupils learn that being part of a team requires the same effort from all members to succeed. Pupils say that they learn to respect rules, teammates and opponents.

5.3 What is the name, job title and email address of the staff lead in this area?

Name: Bobby Croll / Tara Finney

Title: Lead sports coach / Head of school

Email: Bobby.croll@dcsvt.org / Tara.finney@dcsvt.org

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

Following discussion with school leaders, they would like to reflect further about what support they might like.

This review 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.

Schools can access the School Support Directory; the Challenge Partners online tool that enables schools to connect with other schools in your hub and across the national network of schools.

Schools can also attend Sharing Leading Practice events where schools showcase excellent and/or innovative practice. Sharing Leading Practice events allow school leaders with specific improvement needs to visit a school or attend an online webinar hosted by a school, with outstanding provision in that area.

Both the School Support Directory and the Shared Leading Practice events can be accessed via the Challenge Partners website.