

Chalfont Valley E-ACT Primary Academy

Bell Lane, Little Chalfont, Amersham, Buckinghamshire HP6 6PF

Inspection dates	16–17 March 2016
Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The effective leadership of the school principal, supported by the executive principal, has brought about significant improvements since the previous inspection.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is consistently good in all classes. Teachers plan interesting lessons that help pupils learn.
- Pupils achieve well and make good progress. Disadvantaged pupils are well supported, so they make the same good progress as other pupils.
- Pupils who have special educational needs or disability get the extra help they need from teachers and support staff to make sure they make good progress.
- Pupils demonstrate pride in themselves and their school. They have very positive attitudes to learning, behave well and are courteous and polite. They enjoy coming to the school and both pupils and parents say pupils feel safe.
- The trust's representatives are very well informed. They have played a significant role in improving the school and the outcomes for pupils.
- Early years provision is good. Children settle in quickly because of the good routines. The well-planned and fun activities help them learn effectively. As a result, they are well prepared for Year 1.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Some pupils do not have the resilience or skills to produce longer and more complex pieces of writing.
- In some classes there are not enough opportunities for pupils, particularly the most able, to apply their mathematical knowledge and deepen their understanding.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that pupils achieve as much as they can in writing and mathematics by:
 - developing pupils' ability to write longer and more complex pieces
 - providing more opportunities for pupils, particularly the most able, to apply their mathematical knowledge, so that they can deepen their understanding.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- The principal, in partnership with the executive principal, has galvanised staff; they now share leaders' vision for making the school the best it can be. 'Aim high and reach for the stars' reflects the ambition of all staff and pupils. This means there is now a culture of achieving the best outcomes for pupils and developing pupils' sense of pride in themselves and the school. This aspect of the principal and executive principal's leadership is outstanding and contributes strongly to the overall good leadership that exists in the school.
- Accurate self-evaluation by senior leaders has enabled them to judge how well the school is doing. They set targets for improvement, undertake effective monitoring activities and regularly evaluate the impact of their actions. As a result, the school is now good and leaders know what they need to do to improve it further.
- Leaders work very closely with the trust's representatives and appreciate the well-targeted support they receive, both financially and in terms of staff development. Leaders and teachers from other academies in the trust have worked effectively with staff at Chalfont Valley to help them improve more rapidly.
- Leaders have rightly focused on developing teachers' skills so that pupils' learning improves. They work with individual teachers to strengthen their skills. They agree targets for improvement and provide accurate feedback so that, at each stage, teachers know how they can be even better. This well-planned support, combined with teachers' enthusiasm to become more effective, has led to the quality of teaching being good in all year groups.
- The improvements in teaching have brought about better achievement in reading, writing and mathematics. In all year groups pupils are now working at the expected levels for their age and, in reading, the most-able pupils are working above expectations.
- Assessment information is used effectively to check that pupils are making the necessary progress in their learning. Leaders and teachers identify any pupils who are falling behind, or who could achieve more, and agree what support is required for pupils to achieve their potential.
- Leaders hold teachers to account for the progress their pupils make. Clear targets are set for what pupils should achieve. The systems for appraisal are useful and teachers' performance links appropriately to pay.
- Middle leaders have a range of experience. They offer good support and help drive improvements. They work with teachers, helping to improve the progress of pupils in their subjects effectively. They provide reports to the trust's representatives to keep them well informed.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness is well developed and it effectively reinforces traditional British values. Both aspects have high priority in the curriculum and they are celebrated in displays around the school and in classrooms, helping pupils understand the links between both. Leaders ensure that all pupils have equal opportunities to flourish and succeed. Pupils make use of these opportunities in an environment that is free from discrimination.
- Pupils benefit from a broad, balanced, well planned curriculum. It is enhanced with a range of visits and visitors to the school, such as visiting ministers to develop the religious education curriculum. There are a variety of extra-curricular clubs that are well attended by pupils, including a multi-sports club and a science club.
- The sports premium is used well to raise staff expertise in the teaching of physical education. The sports coach works alongside teachers to improve their skill level, providing long-term opportunities for pupils to benefit from this expertise.
- Some parents felt that communication could be improved, and the school is working hard to make this better, for example, by sending out weekly newsletters.
- **The governance of the school**
 - Since the previous inspection, the trust's representatives have replaced the local governing body. The trust's representatives know the school's strengths and weaknesses. They are very well informed, understand and question performance information effectively and play an invaluable part in helping the school improve.
 - The trust's representatives hold leaders to account for the outcomes that pupils achieve. The trust's representatives are fully aware of the quality of teaching in the school; they make informed decisions

about salary progression for teachers and leaders based on the learning of pupils in classes. They carefully audit funding such as pupil premium and sports funding to make sure it is being used effectively for the benefit of pupils.

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Leaders and the trust's representatives ensure that robust procedures are effectively applied by all staff. They work closely with the school's designated person for safeguarding. Training is rigorous and all members of staff are vigilant when it comes to pupils' welfare and safety.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

- The quality of teaching has improved since the previous inspection and is now good. Teachers' secure subject knowledge is used to plan interesting and stimulating lessons that motivate pupils and make them want to learn. This is particularly the case in English and mathematics, where teachers now successfully build on pupils' prior learning. They focus on developing the basic skills in these subjects before moving pupils on to harder work.
- Teachers provide pupils with materials and activities that match their individual needs. They provide greater challenge and more open-ended activities, but these are more effectively applied in reading than in writing and mathematics.
- Teachers now have higher expectations of what pupils can learn. Pupils work hard during lessons and complete work that is set. They are developing pride in their work and respond well to the praise they receive for good work.
- Learning support assistants are effective; they offer a good level of support for those pupils who need extra help or encouragement.
- The teaching of writing is improving. Pupils discuss their work with each other; this helps them to develop their ideas and check the accuracy of their sentences. During one lesson, Year 1 pupils listened to and watched a video of the rainforest. They rehearsed their sentence aloud, for example, 'I can see a colourful parrot', before writing it. This helped them to plan what they wanted to say, then check they had written it accurately. Teachers are developing pupils' stamina for writing by providing activities to produce longer pieces, but this is in the early stages.
- Mathematics is well taught, especially number and calculations. Teachers provide pupils with opportunities to use numbers and make quick calculations. This has had a really positive impact on pupils' confidence. The mathematics coordinator has worked closely with every teacher to make these opportunities plentiful and interesting. Pupils' ability to apply their mathematical knowledge is improving. This is an area that the mathematics co-ordinator has begun to develop further, but there is more to do, especially for the most-able pupils.
- Reading is a strength. Teachers promote reading for pleasure well through discussing and celebrating well known authors and ensuring that pupils read every day. Years 5 and 6 enjoyed and benefited from the opportunity to read to younger pupils during the recent World Book Day. Reading lessons focus on developing pupils' fluency while using discussion to develop their understanding and comprehension of the text they are reading. There is good provision for pupils who struggle with reading or are falling behind. Many parents support this by reading with their children at home.
- Teachers effectively use assessment information to plan further learning. They update planned work between lessons to address misconceptions and often reshape the learning during lessons if pupils do not understand. Work in books reflects the school's marking policy, which is mostly consistently applied across the school.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupil's personal development and welfare is good.
- Leaders and teachers promote confidence and self-belief in pupils so that they develop a sense of pride in themselves and their work. As a result, pupils' attitudes to learning are consistently good. Pupils like to talk about their work and speak enthusiastically about the rewards they receive for completing a task successfully or for achieving a personal goal. One pupil commented, by way of example, 'I got gold for

finishing my work on time.’

- Pupils know why it is important to stay fit and healthy and understand that this means eating a healthy diet and taking exercise.
- Pupils enjoy the responsibility they are given and take roles, such as being a school councillor, very seriously.
- Pupils and parents say that the school is a safe place. Both agree that instances of bullying are rare and, when they do happen, adults always deal appropriately with their concerns. Parents and pupils appreciate the new security measures introduced to improve safety, such as the new electronic gates. One of the older pupils commented, ‘It is safe because there is always an adult there to help you.’
- Pupils have a good knowledge of how to stay safe on the internet. They say that they have lessons and assemblies to help them understand possible dangers. They recognise that they should not give any personal information while online.
- There are now robust procedures in place to follow up any concerns regarding pupils’ welfare. These are well documented to make sure appropriate action is taken when there are concerns.
- The views of pupils and parents are valued. The majority of parents who completed the Ofsted online questionnaire, Parent View, agree that their children are happy at the school.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils are polite, courteous and very welcoming to visitors. Their movement around the school was impeccable, diligently walking in straight lines.
- Relationships are positive and behaviour in lessons is almost always good. Teachers have high expectations of behaviour, built on rewarding pupils’ efforts. On the very rare occasions when pupils show more challenging behaviour, this is well managed, keeping any possible disruption of learning to a minimum.
- Pupils’ developing sense of pride in their work is having a positive effect on their behaviour. These trends are reflected in improving outcomes and levels of attendance that are now close to the national average.
- Parents, staff and pupils say that behaviour is well managed and the behaviour policy is consistently applied. Pupils say that any instances of poor behaviour on the playground are dealt with swiftly.

Outcomes for pupils

are good

- Outcomes across the school in reading, writing and mathematics have improved since the previous inspection and are now good in all year groups.
- National test results for Year 6 in 2015 showed significant improvement and were above average in reading, writing and mathematics. The school’s assessment information and work in books clearly indicate pupils are making good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The proportion of pupils achieving the expected level in the national phonics check has improved steadily over the last two years. This trend is set to continue and the proportions of pupils expected to reach the required level are at least in line with national expectations.
- The most recent national assessments showed that pupils achieved below national expectations by the end of Year 2 in reading, writing and mathematics. However, progress is improving and evidence from the inspection shows that current pupils in Year 1 and Year 2 are making good progress across all three areas. They are making at least expected progress in reading, writing and mathematics and outcomes are now good.
- The improvements in the teaching of reading are bringing about improvements in the outcomes pupils are now achieving. Pupils read with fluency and their comprehension skills are developing. The school has invested in new books and set up three small libraries to promote reading.
- In mathematics pupils make good progress and achieve well. Their progress in number is particularly evident in books. There is a structured approach to calculation and pupils build up their skills systematically. This is particularly the case in Year 1 and Year 2, where progress is improving more rapidly.
- Pupils’ writing is improving. The recent focus on grammar and spelling is showing a positive impact in work produced in pupils’ books. Pupils throughout the school are beginning to use more complex sentences, together with a wider range of punctuation.
- The school now has very good procedures in place to identify those pupils who are falling behind and

need extra help. As a result, those pupils who are disadvantaged, or who have special educational needs or disability, make the same good progress as all others. These groups are provided with activities that are well matched to their ability and needs.

- Pupils eligible for the pupil premium are well supported through a number of programmes that help them keep up with their work. The inclusion manager coordinates this extra help and successfully monitors the progress of these pupils and ensures that they achieve as well as other pupils.

Early years provision

is good

- Chalfont Valley has good induction activities in place to ensure that children enter the school in the early years feeling comfortable and confident. These include induction visits and the parents' and children's teddy bear picnic.
- There is a clear focus on children's personal development as soon as they start because, although they enter with knowledge and skills that are typical for their age, they are less confident and display less well developed skills in communication and language.
- Teachers focus on the development of language, encouraging children to speak about their learning to adults and each other. This approach develops vocabulary, confidence and self-esteem. As a result, children in the nursery and reception classes have good attitudes to work and thoroughly enjoy their learning, as shown by their sustained concentration when taking part in activities. The proportion of children who leave the reception class with a good level of development has improved over the last two years and is now close to the national average, so most children are well prepared to start Year 1.
- The interim arrangement that the school has put in place for the leadership of the setting is effective. The interim leader has reorganised the classroom and resources so children know where to find activities and equipment to support their learning. She is receiving good-quality support from an early years specialist who works across the trust's academies.
- The changes to the environment have built on the good routines already established and this has supported the good behaviour that children display, both indoors and in the outdoor area. Teachers have high expectations and teach children to sit still and listen to their friends when they are talking. They treat the children with kindness and sensitivity and always make time to listen to what the children are saying.
- Work in the children's learning journals shows the good progress they are making in their learning, particularly in number. Daily phonics lessons enable children to make good progress with their reading and extra help is given to those who need it.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teaching and support staff share planning effectively, ensuring high expectations for children and clear guidance for support staff. Effective use of assessment promotes good learning although, on occasions, writing tasks do not always allow the most-able children to show their best work.
- Links with parents are good. The environment is safe and secure and well monitored by staff to ensure that all children are safe when undertaking activities indoors and outside. One parent commented, 'They look after the children so well.' This reflects the good safeguarding procedures, ensuring that all welfare requirements are met.

School details

Unique reference number	138583
Local authority	Buckinghamshire
Inspection number	10009201

This inspection was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy
Age range of children	3–11
Gender of children	Mixed
Number of children on the school roll	119
Appropriate authority	Trust's representatives
Chair	Michael Wemms
Principal	Sarah English
Telephone number	01494 764521
Website	www.chalfontvalleye-actacademy.org.uk
Email address	office@chalfontvalleye-actacademy.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	29–30 January 2014

Information about this school

- Chalfont Valley E-ACT Primary Academy is part of the E-ACT multi-academy trust.
- There have been extensive changes in the leadership of the school since the last inspection. There is a new school principal, a new executive principal, a new deputy principal and a new assistant principal. The local governing body has been replaced and this role is now undertaken by the trust's representatives.
- Children are taught in a mixed-age Nursery and Reception class, mixed-age Year 3 and Year 4 class, mixed-age Year 5 and Year 6 class with Year 1 and Year 2 being single-aged classes.
- The proportion of disadvantaged children supported by the pupil premium funding is above the national average. The pupil premium is additional funding for those children who are known to be eligible for free school meals and those who are looked after by the local authority.
- The proportions of children that are from a minority ethnic background and those who speak English as an additional language are below average.
- The school runs a breakfast club which is open every day.
- In 2015, the school met the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for children's attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics.

Information about this inspection

- All teachers were observed teaching; these observations took place jointly with a senior leader in the school.
- Discussions were held with senior leaders, members of staff and representatives of the trust.
- A wide range of documentation was reviewed, including those related to safeguarding, behaviour and attendance, school improvement planning, assessment information, monitoring of teaching and the school's own self-evaluation.
- The inspector spoke to pupils informally and they were observed during playtime, lunch, and before and after school. Two meetings were held with a group of pupils to talk about their learning, behaviour and safety. He also took account of the 11 responses to the pupils' online survey.
- The inspector listened to pupils in Years 2 and 6 reading.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents through meeting a small number of parents, 21 responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire, Parent View, and the school's own parents' survey with 44 responses.

Inspection team

Bill James, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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