GREAT EASTON CHURCH OF ENGLAND (AIDED) PRIMARY SCHOOL



SCHOOL PROSPECTUS 2023/2024



(photo thanks to Sarah Morris photography)

Our School Vision:

We are God's children and global citizens. We will be bold enough to use our voices, brave enough to evoke change in the world and strong enough to stand up for what is right. We are valued and are part of a Christian family that grows together in faith, love and kindness.

> 'Let all that you do be done in love'. (1 Corinthians 16:14) Love of learning, life and living. Associated values: Courage, Compassion, Forgiveness and Joy.



Great Easton C of E (Aided) Primary School Great Easton Dunmow Essex CM6 2DR <u>admin@greateaston.essex.sch.uk</u> www.greateastonprimary.co.uk

Tel: 01371 870219

Dear Parent/Carer,

Thank you for showing an interest in Great Easton C of E (Aided) Primary School, I hope that you will find this prospectus informative.

Above all else our school is a happy place! I am always told by visitors and new members of staff how happy our children are and how our children 'are themselves - nobody feels they have to pretend'. Children's lives should be full of joy, childhood is precious and at Great Easton we balance making school a place where our children can thrive whilst achieving highly, behaving beautifully and loving life!

At Great Easton Primary School high priority is given to providing quality learning experiences so that all individuals can achieve personal excellence within a happy and secure Christian environment. The school community encourages pupils to meet the challenges of life ahead by fostering positive attitudes, acquiring knowledge and skills and promoting a life-long love for learning. We want our children to go on and use their voices to change the world and make it a better place. We encourage 'big thinking'.

Our only school 'rule' is to choose kindness. We follow Paul Dix's approach to behaviour and believe in restorative approaches. Our children behave excellently because it is the right thing to do, not because they fear being shamed or punished.

I am always pleased to show prospective parents around our school and prefer to see families individually rather than do group tours. If you would like an appointment please contact the office and I would be delighted to show you our lovely school, learn about your child and answer any questions you may have.

Claire Jackman Headteacher CONTENTS **Key Information** School aims Safeguarding children Who works at our School What makes Great Easton School Special? The school environment The school in its community Links to secondary schools Admissions policy When do children start school? School organisation Classroom organisation The school day Uniform policy Educational visits School transport / Travelling to School How children learn at Great Easton The school curriculum **Religious Education** Worship Assemblies Special Educational Needs Daily life at Great Easton School Arrival and departure Absences Arrangements for children who fall ill at school Arrangements for children taking medication Lunch time/ break-time arrangements Afterschool / lunchtime clubs Friendship and behaviour expectations Promoting a healthy school Partnership with parents Home school agreement Helping your child at home The Parent/Teacher Association How to find out what's happening at school How to help your child do well at school What to do if you have a problem Charging policy **History of Great Easton School** Address: Great Easton CE (Aided) Primary School Snow Hill Great Easton Great Dunmow Essex CM6 2DR Telephone: 01371 870219 Headteacher: Miss Claire Jackman Chairs of Governors: Mrs Olivia Smith & Mrs Alison Skinner

admin@greateaston.essex.sch.uk

Email:

Website	www.greateastonprimary.co.uk
Status of school:	Primary: children aged 4 - 11
Number of pupils:	149

School Aims

We pride ourselves on being a school where your child is nurtured in a safe, stimulating and vibrant environment. It's a place where children love learning and love life. Our understanding of each individual child is paramount to ensuring every child is confident, secure and happy in themselves. This helps them to thrive and succeed, not just in school, but for the rest of their lives. We celebrate success and work together to achieve our absolute best.

What makes Great Easton School So Special?

Great Easton School recognises the uniqueness of each of its pupils and strives to acknowledge and develop the individual talents of all of its children. We are a village school that provides a secure and happy environment where pupils are nurtured and where the contribution of each individual is highly valued. We call it our 'school family' and we work hard to maintain a happy and vibrant atmosphere where children thrive and fulfil their potential. Some of the features are listed below:

Opportunities for learning:

- A positive learning atmosphere where children develop a love of life and learning.
- An excellent staff team committed to raising attainment for all pupils and to maintaining consistently high standards.
- A friendly, Christian based ethos.
- A high number of dedicated and experienced learning support assistants and classroom helpers.
- We don't just expect achievement we celebrate it! Musical, artistic sporting and academic success is shared and celebrated.
- Strong musical and sporting traditions.
- School productions have a role for **everyone**, not just the most confident and extrovert.
- Spacious facilities, including a library, resource room, 'the Den,' (a large classroom space for group work), 'the Cave' (a quiet, sensory area), 'the Pod' (music room), multi-purpose hall and extensive grounds which include a pond, woodland area, an early years play area, a den building area and a chicken quiet area all of which enhance learning.

- A School Parliament of children elected by their peers which enables pupils to influence how the school develops and introduces them to the workings of democracy. We work closely with the DEEP schools and their parliaments. We have the shared 'global aim' of reducing how much plastic we are using.
- Children also volunteer to become 'School Improvement Ambassadors' and work with the headteacher and other leaders on driving the school forward and implementing the School Improvement Plan which impacts on learning and teaching.
- Participation in inter-school projects involving sports, maths, English, Science, history, RE, drama and music.
- A range of extra-curricular clubs and activities for example, Young Voices, Disney singalong, art, tennis, multisports and Young Leaders.
- Peer mentoring our year 5 children are playleaders and facilitate games. All classes take part in peer reading and read with another class each week. Our year 6 'buddies' support the new reception children when they start in September and support them at playtimes and through shared reading, PE and many other ways too.

Opportunities for social development:

- High value is placed on creating well-rounded pupils who are able to communicate clearly and to form warm and caring relationships.
- Children are encouraged to become independent learners whilst developing tolerance, understanding and respect for others and for their environment.
- An active community partnership between church, family and school with much participation from the school in the life of the church and the community.
- An active and welcoming Parent Teacher Association (PTA) and "hands-on", hardworking governors.

An environment of which we are very proud:

- A peaceful rural location with plenty of outdoor space and beautiful views.
- An enclosed safe activity area for our Early Years children.
- A Den Building area designed by our children.
- A quiet area where our chickens live and are enjoyed by the children.
- An adventure play area

The School in its Community

The school is proud of the active part it plays in the community. We participate regularly in church services which include involvement in Harvest, Christmas, Easter and Christingle. The Annual Year 6 Leavers' service also takes place in Great Easton Church. We also hold our own Remembrance service at the War Memorial each year. We are able to use the walking bus route to travel to the church, so we walk across the field to get there safely.

We welcome many visitors from the local area to the school including our Rector, parents and governors. They often come to help with activities at the school. All of our governors are drawn from the local community. We have a register of local experts who are able to enrich curricular activities at our school. We also receive visitors from further afield such as visiting artists or musicians.

We organise regular fundraising events for charity such as Comic Relief, Place2Be and Children in Need. The children research and vote on which charity they wish to support each year, this year it is the Air Ambulance.

Links to Secondary Schools

The school falls within the catchment area of Helena Romanes School in Dunmow for secondary education. The majority of our children go on there, but others regularly go on to Joyce Frankland Academy and to schools in Bishops Stortford and Saffron Walden. Parents may also enter their child for the 11+ examination for entry to the Chelmsford and Colchester Grammar Schools.

Admissions policy

When do children start school?

All children whose fifth birthday falls within the next school year (1st September - 31st August) will be admitted in the September of the year that they are five.

In order to ease the transition between home and/or nursery and playgroup and school, we invite children who are starting school the following term to visit us in the preceding term. The children have an opportunity to meet staff and they become familiar with the school routines and with what will be expected of them when they begin school. This reduces anxiety levels about a new experience and in many cases leads to eagerness to begin school immediately!

What if the school is over subscribed?

When the school is over-subscribed, the **Admissions Policy** comes into force. A copy of this is on the school's website.

School Organisation

The school has five classrooms, an extra teaching room (The Den) and a resources area for seven year groups.

The children are grouped into classes according to numbers in each year group. Therefore, as with all small schools, most classes have mixed ages.

Our staff are very experienced in planning the teaching and learning for these mixed age classes. All children are able to work at the level that meets their needs and extends their learning. This is achieved by following up whole class activities by working in small groups that are supported by the teacher and learning support assistants.

Pupils are taught for 32.5 hours per week. This includes the National Curriculum, (see later for details), Personal and Social Education and Religious Education. In addition to this we have morning and afternoon registration, collective worship assemblies, break and lunch times. We recognise that these times are very important for developing, social and communication skills.

Educational Visits

Pupils learn best from first-hand experience which is why the school believes in the importance of educational visits and visiting speakers to support class topics.

Recent visits have taken place to the Natural History Museum, Braintree Islamic Centre, Neasden Hindu temple, Christmas pantomime, singing at the O2, Stansted Airport's Aerozone, Colchester Museum, Boydells Farm, Walton-on-the Naze, the Anglo-Saxon village and the Fitzwilliam Museum.

Visitors to school include professional musicians, artists and authors and members of the local community.

Residential Trips

Older pupils have the opportunity to go on residential visits to Danbury Outdoor Educational Centre in Year 5 and the Isle of Wight in Year 6.

School Transport

Approximately 30% of children at Great Easton arrive at school by bus or taxi. The other 70% either walk or come in cars. The school has a well organised system for escorting children from the school to their bus or taxi at the end of each day.

If you require information about whether your child qualifies for public transport to school, please go on line at <u>www.essex.gov.uk</u> and follow links to primary travel.

How Children Learn at Great Easton

It is well known that pupils learn best in a stimulating environment where active learning can take place. They learn through first hand experience, when they are motivated and challenged and when their curiosity is engaged. Visits to places of interest or visitors invited to school therefore provide an added stimulus to learning. At Great Easton we recognise this and aim to develop an enthusiasm for learning by making it relevant, appropriate and exciting. Naturally, we cannot do this without the help of our parents. Therefore parents receive a termly curriculum share letter to explain what the class will learn and how parents can help.

Learning takes place through a variety of teaching approaches that may focus on whole school, class, group or individually based support. Pupils' effort and achievements are strongly valued and there are high expectations in all areas.

The School Curriculum



The Courageous Curriculum

The Concept:

Jonathan Lear, a teacher from Sheffield, spoke at a headteachers' conference about how he had revolutionised his school's curriculum and I knew this would fit with our school's ethos perfectly! We were able to arrange for several road trips to Sheffield so that teachers could see for themselves the awesomeness in action.

Many staff meetings and planning sessions later we had the foundations for our own Great Easton version of an exciting and innovative curriculum.

One of the most frustrating elements of teaching is never having enough time. We start the term buzzing with ideas about the outcomes we will see in all the different subjects...however, the reality is often very different as we felt as though we were continually spinning plates and rushing the children through a curriculum. Whilst we did our best to make learning as fun and meaningful as possible, there was always a nag in our head that there must be a different way. So hearing what Jonathan had to say about re-thinking the approach to the curriculum resonated with us.

Ultimately, we are passionate that children will leave GEPs ready "for life in the twenty-first century by creating opportunities for learning that are engaging, motivating and memorable." Our curriculum " is a system that encourages independence, curiosity and creativity; a system that produces collaborators, innovators, leaders and, above all, a system that helps our children to understand what it means to be human". (Guerilla Teaching by Jonathan Lear Independent Thinking Press 2015 p.11)

The Curriculum Design:

Skills

Skills-based non-negotiables that underpin the curriculum and creates a foundation that are essential for learning. (see Appendix One GEPs Subject Skills Map).



The difficulty with the old curriculum was that we were trying to teach every subject every week. The limitations of this meant that we could be teaching two or three subjects an afternoon which means that teaching is rushed and children don't get a chance to explore their own lines enquiry. The three term structure enables a deeper focus: 'Create' is based around art, drama & music, 'Discover' has a history theme & 'Explore' is all about geography. This allows us to be able to deepen the children's understanding of these subjects in a much more focused way.

Concept Grid

These are words that make connections across subjects and beyond subjects e.g. human rights - justice, beauty and equality are all concepts that could be covered and explored through history, geography, science and art. By taking a broader view of things we can get some big ideas and also allow us to focus on RE and PSHCE. Each term we will ensure Christian values are included as part of the concept words.

Key Enquiry Question

This needs to be an over-arching philosophical question. This allows us to explore the concepts and kick-start the children's curiosity and desire to learn more. This also allows opportunity for the children to develop further lines of enquiry. All teachers and LSAs enjoyed training from the philosophy man in October 2019 to ensure we are really effective in leading and modelling questioning.

Authentic Outcomes and Critical Audiences

An authentic outcome means having a real event at the end of the project as a goal for the children to work towards. This builds motivation and raises expectations and expertise. This helps the children to be viewed as professionals or as people capable of producing professional work. Expectation and aspiration are not always the norm. It helps to build self-esteem, belief and confidence and is an excellent way of developing awareness of professions and careers.

Critique

This enables the production of beautiful work. Positive feedback and growth mindset e.g. 'That's an amazing picture, what a great start', the children can begin to embed a subconscious understanding that there are always improvements that can be made. This is a type of feedback that can be individual or given to peers.

Each term we will continue to send out a curriculum share letter so that you are aware of how you can support your child with their learning. Exercise books continue to come home so that you can see what they are learning in school so you can discuss their learning with them at home. Dojo is also a fantastic way to keep up to date with day to day events in the classroom.

10 Things

These are the main learning intentions we want the children to have learned. These are different for each class dependent on year groups but are based around the project and link across classes.

Super 7

These are quizzes used in class several times a week to check children are 'knowing more and remembering more'. There are 7 questions based on prior learning and help us to monitor children's understanding and helps to revise and build on learning. Questions 1,2,3 relate to last lesson, 4 last week, 5 several weeks ago and 6 & 7 months ago or even last year! This helps us to check learning is sticking.

Religious Education

As a Church of England Aided school we follow the religious education guidelines in accordance with the Diocese. Through this children develop an understanding of the Christian church, as well as learning about other religions. Our aims are as follows:

- To awaken and develop each child's sense of self worth and value as " A child of God".
- To help the child value, extend, mend and live within a variety of relationships.
- To give the child a knowledge and appreciation of the rich variety of religious beliefs, practises and life-styles found in God's world today.
- To awaken, affirm and develop the child's sense of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
- For each child to know that for Christians, God is specially revealed in Jesus.
- To offer the child experience of life and worship in the Church, school and community.
- To encourage children's awe, wonder and enjoyment of the created world, and their responsibility for it.

Daily Worship Assemblies

The school assembles together regularly for an act of worship. We also attend Great Easton Church at least once a term for a service. The teacher leading assembly follows the themes planned for the term. The rector regularly leads an assembly at school. Birthdays are celebrated regularly during assembly.

As a Church of England School the distinctiveness and effectiveness of the school as a church school is evaluated as part of a SIAMS inspection every few years. Our last inspection took place in November 2015 and the report can be found here: http://greateastonprimary.co.uk/js/plugins/filemanager/files/2015_2016/SIAMS_Report_2015_5.pdf

A termly Communion service is offered for the older pupils and is held at school to expand children's understanding of Christian faith.

Our school prayer

Let peace live here, Let friendship flourish here. Let learning fill our day, May every room be full of happiness and Love be all around. Love of one another, Love of all people and Love of life and living. Amen

Special Educational Needs

We encourage all our pupils to work hard, try their best and feel proud of their achievements. However, it is important to remember every pupil develops at different rates and in different ways. During their school life, some pupils will need additional support. We try to identify pupils' needs as early as possible by monitoring their happiness, progress and achievement.

For more information please see our SEND Information Report <u>https://www.greateastonprimary.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/142/GEPS-SEND-informati</u> <u>on-report-22-23.pdf</u>

Daily Life at Great Easton

Arrival and departure

- The school gates are opened to pupils from 8.30 am and everyone is expected to be present by 8.40am for Registration.
- Parking at the school is limited, therefore if at all possible we encourage parents bringing/collecting their children by car to use the Village Hall car park and walking bus. Parking is to be avoided near the upper gate when the school buses and taxis are likely to be arriving or departing. Children who arrive by county transport are escorted to the bus/taxi after school.
- At the end of the day we ask parents to wait outside their children's classroom in order to avoid congestion. We are careful to ensure children are collected by their parents or a known adult at the end of the day and ask that you let us know if somebody different is collecting so that we can make sure they are safe.
- Parents collecting pupils at different times of the day are requested to sign in the office diary by the security window. Please let us know if normal collection or transport arrangements change in order to avoid any confusion at the end of the day.
- During the school day (8.40am until 3.10pm) both the car park pedestrian and side access gates will be locked. Access to the school during this time will only be via the front pedestrian gate and front entrance.

Late arrivals

Whilst the school shows sympathy to unavoidable lateness, if it is persistent it will be noted in the register and followed up. After all, arriving on time is good for pupils as it helps them to develop a good routine and to avoid anxiety.

Absences

Please inform the school office by telephone or Schnappy by 9.00 am if your child is absent from school.

Arrangements for children who become ill at school

If your child becomes unwell during the school day or an emergency occurs, we will contact you.

Arrangements for children taking medication at school

We have a policy to explain how we manage administering medicines. If your child requires medicine during the school day, please speak with Mrs Thake in the office.

Lunch time arrangement

Lunchtimes start at 12.15 and finish at 1.15 each day.

- Children can have a hot school dinner or bring sandwiches from home. Children in reception, year 1 and year 2 are entitled to free school meals.
- School meals are cooked on the premises and are available at a small charge for KS2 children, which can be paid weekly, or in advance half-termly or termly.
- Sample menus are available to view on the website. No food is fried. Fresh fruit, vegetables and salad is available with every meal. School meals at Great Easton are very popular, with approximately 70% of children having them.
- Alternatively, pupils may bring healthy packed lunches, but please no glass bottles or cans and **nothing containing nuts** as we have children with severe nut allergies and cannot give a foolproof promise that children will not share their food with each other!
- Pupils eating both school and packed lunches sit together in the hall in mixed age groups as we believe that this is good for their social development. They are supervised by midday assistants.
- Parents are welcome to book a school lunch and come and eat with their child. Please let the office know in advance.
- Details of eligibility for free school meals are available from the school website <u>www.greateastonprimary.co.uk</u>

Break-time Arrangements

Children are supervised during playtimes by at least two members of staff. Snack time is separate from playtime to encourage children to enjoy a healthy snack and a drink of water. They then get to have a run around and play during break time.

The year 5 children are also trained as play leaders; this training includes the initiation of games within the playground, dealing with minor disagreements and enhancing pupil relationships and encouraging friendships. During wet weather children stay in classrooms where they are supervised and have a variety of activities to entertain them. During snowy weather and cold winter days we endeavour to take the children out, but ask that they have warm coats, gloves, hats, scarves and wellies.

Expectations for Behaviour

Our school is a community in which respect is based on consideration for others, where we encourage our children to react sensitively and appropriately to the needs of others. Our only school rule is 'Be kind...always'. Our year 5 children are trained as 'play leaders' to assist staff on duty at break and lunchtime. They are also 'buddied' up with the Reception children.

We reward and celebrate positive attitudes to work, consideration shown to others and courteous behaviour. We follow Paul Dix's principles and celebrate children who 'go above and beyond' and they have a hot chocolate (or ice lolly if it is hot) with the headteacher and maybe a game of table tennis too if they would like!

We have extremely high expectations for pupil behaviour and courtesy so discipline and disappointing behaviour is rare. However, we have policies in place involving the class teacher, parents and, if necessary, the headteacher, to solve any issues which do arise. We use restorative conversations and fair consequences to support children's choices and help them learn and develop.

It is important that any change in home circumstances is shared with the school because pupils can, on occasion, display inappropriate behaviour or anxiety when under stress. It is helpful to both the child and the teacher if the latter is aware of any potential problems.

In rare cases of serious or persistent anti-social behaviour, exclusion from the school is an option. Bullying is not tolerated under any circumstances and the school has a clear policy on dealing with the matter firmly.

Promoting a Healthy School

• We were re-validated for the National Healthy Schools Status and now hold the Enhanced status. This is an award of which we are very proud. We continue to work with pupils, staff and the outside community to ensure children have a clear understanding about their health. <u>http://www.healthyschools.gov.uk/</u>

Helping your child at home

Please encourage your child to read every day at home. Also, taking a keen interest in what they have done at school that day and showing that you value how they have spent their time is likely to enhance their enjoyment of the school day.

How to find out what's happening at school

We recognise the importance of communication between home and school and would like parents to feel welcome to discuss any matters of concern to them. The best way to do this is to make an appointment with either the head or class teacher. There are also termly open consultation evenings and an annual school open evening, termly curriculum share letters, reading record books, SMART books, parent workshops and forums. In addition, we send regular updates through an app called Class Dojo and the school newsletter 'The Grapevine' which is emailed to all parents each Wednesday, keeping them informed about the progress of the school throughout the term.

We are always happy to hear from our parents, not just where they have issues of concern but also where they believe that there is reason for commendation and celebration!

Parents can go online to visit our website at <u>www.greateastonprimary.co.uk</u>

How to Help Your Child do Well at School

Praise them and be proud of their achievements

Praise is a far greater motivator than criticism. Listen to their stories about their day, walk beside them when you collect them (and not in front of them on your phone).

Support the PTA

The PTA raises valuable funds for the school and is always on the lookout for new members, please let us know if you would like to get involved.

Reading regularly

Little and often is best. Reading is important and if you value reading time, so will they.

Support your child with their learning at home - we call it **SMART learning** - please see separate policy on our website.

https://www.greateastonprimary.co.uk/statutory-information-policies-useful-docs/

We send the children's books home regularly for you to have a look at. This way you are able to keep up to date with their school work. We would encourage you to write comments in their books - the children really welcome your feedback too!

What to do if you have a problem

However well a school is working, there is always room for improvement and there may be times when you will want to raise a concern or complaint. At Great Easton School, we hope that problems can be dealt with informally and quickly, should they arise. Often a quick word with your child's class teacher can sort out any misunderstanding.

We also have a clear complaints procedure which is available as part of our complaints policy, which is available here:

https://www.greateastonprimary.co.uk/statutory-information-policies-useful-docs/

Musical Instrument Tuition

Individual music lessons are available if requested by parents. These are provided by peripatetic teachers from Essex Music Services or private tutors. There is a charge which includes the cost of tuition only. Parents are responsible for providing sheet music and hire or purchase of musical instrument and necessary insurance. Music lessons and payment is arranged directly with Essex Music Services or the individual teacher. If you are entitled to free school meals you can obtain a voucher towards the cost of tuition provided through Essex Music Services.

Swimming

The school provides swimming lessons in accordance with the national curriculum but we do request a voluntary contribution towards the cost of the hire of the pool, instructor and

transport to the pool. This is currently £17 for 10 lessons. We ensure all children in key stage two are competent swimmers, any children finding swimming challenging are encouraged to swim for the next term until they are more confident swimmers. So children may swim from year 2 to year 6 depending upon their ability.

And finally...a brief history of Great Easton School

Great Easton Church of England Primary School was founded in 1759 when Mrs Rebecca Meade, the daughter of a London merchant, bequeathed a sum of money which enabled a school to be established in the parish for 24 girls.

A trust fund was set up to provide instruction in reading, religious education and practical skills such as knitting. When they left school, the girls were given clothing to equip them for domestic service. In 1840 a new school was built by the Rebecca Meade trustees near to where Great Easton Village Hall now stands.

On 1st February 1882 the building which still stands was erected on land donated by the Earl and Countess of Warwick (the Maynard family, from which the Countess came, having owned the land since Elizabethan times). The Countess of Warwick in particular was already well-known for her work in the field of educational reform and gave money to improve learning opportunities for all. She is known to have visited the school many times and, with the consent of the Maynard family, the stag which was part of the Maynard crest now stands at the centre of the Great Easton school logo.

The school built in 1882 was initially designed to serve the parishes of Great Easton and Tilty. The first log book described the new buildings as "handsome and commodious and an asset to the neighbourhood".

Little Easton Church of England school was closed in 1958, to be followed by Broxted CE school in 1963. Pupils from both schools, together with those from Molehill Green CE school joined Great Easton school. The original school building was extended in 1975 and a new heating system installed.

When the Rebecca Meade Trust was set up, the Rector of Great Easton became a trustee and so began the school's long association with the church.

The Church of England was a pioneer in the field of education and founded a substantial number of the nation's schools. This school is a Church Foundation, grant-aided by the Department of Education and Employment and maintained by the Local Education Authority. The Rebecca Mead Foundation, still administered by trustees, has responsibility for improvements to and for the upkeep of the exterior of the building.

Finally, I am very proud of our children but I truly believe we do more than educate, we work hard to inspire our children so they develop 'a love of learning, life and living'. We have an obligation to give all the children in our care the very best education and childhood we can! We look forward to working with your family. Please pop in to see us or email Sharon, in the office, with any questions or queries as we are always here to help!

Claire Jackman (Headteacher).