

Inspection of a good school: Chesterton Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Alchester Road, Chesterton, Bicester, Oxfordshire OX26 1UN

Inspection dates:

7 and 8 March 2023

Outcome

Chesterton Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy and confident at this small village school. They thrive on the many sports activities available such as badminton, athletics, hockey and multi-skills. From trips to football matches to a school equestrian team, experiences are thoughtful and aim at building pupils' self-belief. Leaders recognise all pupils' achievements inside and outside of school, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). One pupil said, 'You might not like sport before you join our school but by the time you leave you will love it!'

Pupils' wider development expands beyond the school's commitment to sports. Pupils know and model the school's values. They celebrate 'hope, compassion, respect, humility, resilience and integrity' through assemblies and collective worship. Staff promote 'learning powers' to help foster independence by encouraging pupils to 'try your best', 'be curious' and 'persevere.' Pupils are polite, respectful and behave well. There is a calm, orderly environment where pupils have a clear understanding of what bullying is. Pupils rightly know that bullying almost never happens and staff would deal with any incidents quickly. The school's vision of 'create excellence, value every individual, and create opportunities for them to grow and contribute to the world around them' is a shared commitment for all.

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

Leaders are ambitious for all pupils. Leaders have developed clear, sequenced, well-planned curriculums that prepare pupils well for their next stage of education. In subjects such as geography, key knowledge that pupils need to know has been mapped out, including subject-specific vocabulary. Teachers understand how to link that knowledge across lessons, and how to help pupils understand and remember the things they need to

over time. Leaders provide thoughtful trips and visits which enhance pupils' learning such as going to the Black Country Living Museum to support learning about Victorians. In mathematics, including in the early years, staff make good use of the training that is provided for them. Staff are very confident in their use of vocabulary and how to support pupils in developing their mathematical understanding. Staff check pupils' learning, adapt lessons and generally ensure that individual pupils receive the support that they need. However, for a small number of pupils with SEND, this support is not consistently strong because provision is not matched to pupils' needs as closely as it could be.

Most pupils read well. They are supported by skilled staff who use the school's new phonics scheme effectively. Pupils begin learning phonics from the start of their time in Reception and most pupils progress well through the scheme. If any pupil falls behind, staff recognise this and provide extra support to help them catch up. Staff choose rich, engaging texts to share with pupils that help to weave the curriculum together and make learning memorable. Pupils develop a love of reading through shared stories, whole school events and opportunities to engage with a range of texts. However, reading books to help pupils learn to read are not always matched to the sounds that pupils have learned. This means that a small number of pupils do not learn to read as well as they could.

Staff have high expectations. Around the school, pupils behave calmly and respectfully towards each other. Pupils play in cooperative and kind ways and are clear about the school's rules and systems to support behaviour and conduct, such as the school's 'house system' and 'traffic lights'. Pupils talk passionately about their school. They particularly enjoy the range of physical education (PE) and sports activities available to them and say that they feel safe and trust adults at the school. Pupils learn about democracy and enjoy responsibilities such as 'School Councillor', 'Eco Councillor' and 'Sports Captain'. One pupil said, 'We do things here that when we leave, we will look back at and remember.'

Leaders engage with staff well. All staff are proud to work at the school. One member of staff said, 'Everyone is willing to invest - we help because we want to.' Staff work together and are positive about leaders' efforts to develop a positive team ethos through teambuilding events and effective communication. Leaders are proactive in trying to support and help address any concerns related to workload and well-being at the earliest opportunity. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive and appreciate the efforts of the whole school community. One parent said, 'We have been and continue to be delighted with this friendly school for our children. Staff are united in going the extra mile to support families as well as the children and we feel part of a community where we are cared for and nurtured.'

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and staff know pupils very well. They form close relationships and are well supported through extensive pastoral support that is on offer. Staff are alert to any signs that may indicate a child is at risk of harm. Leaders take swift action to get pupils the

timely help they need, which includes referring to external agencies where necessary. The school has a culture of vigilance and leaders respond swiftly when needed. Leaders ensure that staff are well trained. Governors have the knowledge to check the effectiveness of safeguarding, including having training in the safe recruitment of staff.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some of the books that the weakest readers take home to help them learn to read are not matched to the sounds that they have learned. This means that some pupils do not always make the progress that they could. Leaders should implement the new phonics scheme consistently, ensuring that reading books help pupils to develop fluency and accuracy.
- Not all pupils with SEND receive the support that they need consistently well. Therefore, they do not achieve as well as they could. Leaders should ensure that provision for pupils with SEND is developed further so that it matches pupils' needs more precisely.

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 February 2013.

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

Unique reference number	123101
Local authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	10211549
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	181
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Abigail Grenfell
Headteacher	Mr Iain Horner
Website	www.chestertonprimaryschool.org.uk/
Date of previous inspection	7 March 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Chesterton Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School is a single-form entry primary school with two mixed-age classes in Year 4/5 and Year 5/6.
- Since the previous inspection, there have been changes to staffing and governance.
- The number of pupils with SEND is below the national average.
- The number of disadvantaged pupils at the school is well below the national average.
- The number of pupils who have English as an additional language is well below the national average.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school had received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in his evaluation of the school.
- The inspector completed deep dives in early reading, mathematics, and geography. He met with subject leaders, visited lessons, reviewed pupils' work, and spoke to teachers and pupils.

- The inspector scrutinised a range of documentation. He spoke to the headteacher and assistant headteacher throughout the inspection and also met with the SEND coordinator.
- The inspector met with governors, including the chair of the governing body. He spoke to a representative of the local authority and a representative of the Diocese of Oxford.
- The inspector held meetings with the staff responsible for safeguarding and scrutinised the single central record. He considered leaders' safeguarding processes and asked staff questions to establish their understanding of these procedures.
- The inspector observed pupils during playtimes and lunchtimes and discussed safeguarding with pupils.
- The inspector considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. He also considered the responses to the staff and pupil surveys.

Inspection team

Carl McCarthy, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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