

Churchfield Church of England (C) Primary School

Sandy Lane, Rugeley, Staffordshire WS152LB

Inspection dates	10–11 May 2016
Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Require improvement
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Pupils' outcomes are improving but are not yet good.
- Pupils currently in Year 6 have not made enough progress during their time in the school to secure the standards they are capable of in mathematics and writing.
- Attainment in writing is uneven across the school and pupils in some year groups are not achieving as well as they should be.
- Some teaching is not good enough to enable pupils to close the gaps in their spelling, grammar and punctuation skills so that they achieve well.
- The quality of teachers' checks on pupils' learning is variable. Some teachers do not move pupils on to more difficult work quickly enough.
- Leaders and governors do not evaluate some aspects of their work sharply because plans for improvement lack measurable targets.

The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher has worked with determination to raise expectations and standards. Important improvements have been made since the last inspection as a result of good leadership.
- Governors and leaders at all levels understand what needs to be done to improve the school; robust action is taken to tackle weaknesses.
- Better teaching is accelerating the progress and attainment of current pupils in most year groups.
- The personal development, behaviour and welfare of pupils is good. Behaviour and attendance have improved considerably since the last inspection. Pupils now attend well.
- The teaching of phonics is very effective. Pupils enjoy reading and make good progress in their reading skills throughout the school.
- Early years provision is led well and children make strong gains in their knowledge, skills and understanding from their starting points.
- Pupils with additional needs are well cared for. Well-targeted support helps vulnerable pupils to overcome difficulties so that they learn well.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding is promoted effectively.
- Staff, parents and pupils recognise the progress that the school is making.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that pupils make good progress throughout the school, particularly in writing, by:
 - ensuring that pupils acquire a more secure understanding of spelling, punctuation and grammatical conventions and apply these within a range of contexts
 - systematically checking the learning of pupils so that pupils can be moved on to more difficult work at a quick pace when they are ready.

- Further improving the impact of leaders and governors on the pupils' outcomes by:
 - tracking more closely the progress of pupils of different abilities
 - setting precise targets for improvement so that leaders and governors can evaluate more sharply the success of their actions
 - ensuring that new governors develop their skills quickly in order that they can contribute fully to the effectiveness of the governing body.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- The current headteacher has led the school on a clear path of improvement since taking up post. The impact of leaders' work, which was beginning to emerge at the time of the previous inspection, is now clearly evident in the improvements to pupils' behaviour and attendance, better and more consistent standards of teaching and the accelerated progress that pupils are now making. Although outcomes are not yet good, and the impact of teaching in some subjects is uneven, leaders are tackling these issues effectively.
- Parents, staff and pupils recognise the positive changes brought about to the culture and ethos of the school as a result of the high expectations of the headteacher.
- Senior and middle leadership at the school has been strengthened since the last inspection. Greater sharing of roles and responsibilities is supporting the quickened pace of improvements. Leaders know the school well. Careful, regular checks are made on the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement so that leaders set the right priorities for improvement. As a result, leaders identify and tackle weaknesses methodically. For example, leaders have implemented a range of training for staff and changes to the curriculum to make sure that pupils secure a better grasp of basic number skills and spelling, punctuation and grammar. This work is having an impact.
- Leaders' evaluation of some aspects of their work and governors' ability to hold them to account is impeded by a lack of measurable targets set out in the plans that leaders make for improvement.
- Systematic checks on the quality of teaching, which draw together a secure range of evidence, enable leaders to offer regular feedback to staff to support improvements in teachers' practice. Training is carefully linked to whole-school priorities and the findings from checks that leaders undertake. Staff are robustly held to account for ensuring that they deliver high-quality teaching in the classroom and the good progress of pupils through procedures to manage their performance. Although this has not yet secured good teaching or outcomes, it has led to considerable improvements in teaching across the school.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced and provides pupils with coverage of a good range of subjects. Important adjustments have been made that are helping pupils to make better progress than in the past. Pupils benefit from a range of opportunities to rehearse their reading, writing and mathematical skills across the curriculum. This is contributing to improvements in pupils' skills in these areas.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, cultural, social and cultural development is promoted very effectively through the study of religious education, thought-provoking assemblies, a broad range of extra-curricular activities and opportunities for enrichment. For example, a range of outdoor learning activities and well-developed sporting provision helps to develop pupils' social skills; pupils enjoy regular exposure to the arts through specialist music tuition and opportunities to sing and perform in the choir.
- The Christian character of the school underpins its values and ethos. Pupils are taught about the importance of tolerance, respect and helping others. Equal opportunities are promoted and are an important part of the school's values. Pupils also develop a good understanding of other faiths and cultures. Pupils' involvement with a wide range of charitable activities further develops their empathy and understanding of global issues. Consequently, pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- Leaders use pupil premium funding to help disadvantaged pupils to benefit from smaller class sizes and provide targeted support to help individual pupils to catch up, develop pupils' social and emotional skills and provide fair access to educational visits. The positive impact of this work is evident in improvements in the progress and attendance of disadvantaged pupils as a group, and in the leaders' evaluations of how this work has supported considerable improvements for individuals.
- Additional funding to support the provision for physical education and sports in the school is deployed and evaluated well. Pupils receive high-quality tuition from specialist sports coaches and access a broad range of sports and activities including swimming, tennis, dance and outdoor education. Pupils also enjoy a good range of lunchtime and after-school clubs that promote their participation in sports and develop their fitness; these include dance, rugby, football and boxercise. Some pupils receive targeted support to help them to lead healthier lifestyles. Leaders have good plans in place to ensure that this funding results in sustainable improvements to the quality of provision.
- The leadership of special educational needs has improved. Robust identification processes, carefully targeted support and effective working with other agencies are having a positive impact on the outcomes and attendance of pupils with special educational needs and disability. As a result, gaps are closing.

- The local authority has, until this academic year, closely monitored the school's performance since the previous inspection through 'core group' meetings. They recognise the improvements that the headteacher has brought about and the strengthened impact of leaders. In addition, the school is involved in a range of networks that have enabled it to benefit from the sharing of good practice with other schools, and checks to ensure the accuracy of the school's assessments.
- **The governance of the school**
 - The governing body has been reorganised since the previous inspection in order to 'streamline' it and improve its efficiency and effectiveness.
 - Governors are committed to developing their skills. For example, they have commissioned an external review of their performance and have undertaken a skills audit. As a result, the chair of the governing body, who is relatively new to post, has very clear plans in place to improve governors' work.
 - Some governors spoken to during the inspection are new to post. These governors have a secure understanding of their strategic roles and responsibilities as governors, but lack the detailed knowledge of the school's performance that more experienced governors have.
 - Regular reporting from the headteacher and the sharing of published performance information ensures that established governors understand the strengths of the school and areas for improvement. Governors are asking increasingly probing questions and challenging leaders in order to hold them to account for making improvements.
 - Governors fulfil their statutory duties, including those relating to safeguarding, the management of staff performance and management of the school's finances efficiently.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Leaders have ensured that staff are conversant with the latest national guidance and understand the school's policy and procedures. Staff have been fully trained and this training has included coverage of the government's 'Prevent' duty to tackle radicalisation and extremism. Safeguarding is afforded a high priority in staff meetings. As a result, staff are alert to the signs that pupils may be at risk. Leaders keep a close check on vulnerable pupils in the school and work closely with the local authority and families to keep children safe from harm. The curriculum successfully promotes pupils' awareness of how to keep safe.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement because weaknesses in the quality of teaching over time have prevented pupils from achieving as well as they should in writing and mathematics by the time they leave the school at the end of key stage 2. Although teaching is improving, it has not yet been fully successful in enabling pupils in some year groups to overcome the deficiencies in their skills.
- In some year groups, teaching does not equip pupils with a secure understanding of spelling, punctuation and grammatical conventions. This inhibits pupils' abilities to apply these skills in their writing. For example, in a Year 3 writing lesson, pupils were working on the construction of complex sentences that required them to identify subordinate clauses. Although many pupils were able to do this, they did not know what a clause was.
- Teachers do not pick up quickly enough in their checking of pupils' work the errors that pupils make in their spelling, punctuation and grammar. Some inaccuracies in capitalisation and the spelling of high-frequency words are not corrected, so that pupils carry on making the same mistakes.
- In some classes, teachers do not monitor pupils' learning well enough to remedy any misunderstandings pupils may have or move pupils on to more difficult work quickly enough when they are ready. As a result, some pupils are not secure in their knowledge and understanding, and others, including the most-able pupils, do not make the progress they are capable of.
- Despite these shortcomings, the quality of teaching has improved considerably since the previous inspection and has many strengths. Effective teaching is characterised by very positive relationships between teachers and pupils that shape pupils' good attitudes to learning. Pupils are keen to do well, concentrate on activities and engage purposefully in opportunities to discuss and share their learning with their peers. In a Year 2 lesson, pupils wrote at length because their teacher had given them confidence in their abilities and they were eager to meet the teacher's expectations.
- Classrooms have inspiring displays and are well resourced. Year 6 pupils spoke of how the displays in their classroom supported their learning. Pupils in an art lesson relished using mobile technologies to research artists. Teachers skilfully use space in classrooms to help pupils' learning. For example, when pupils come together in the middle of the room, or on the carpet, they listen attentively to their teachers' explanations.

- Teachers use their good knowledge of their pupils and their assessment of pupils' learning from previous lessons to inform their planning. They make effective use of resources to support pupils' learning. For example, in a Year 5 mathematics lesson, less-able pupils were able to develop their application of subtraction successfully when working out how to give change from banknotes because of the teacher's additional input and the well-chosen materials that they were provided with.
- Many lessons are well structured so that pupils know what they need to do to achieve well. Teachers set out clear expectations of what pupils need to do to succeed in their learning. In a Year 5 lesson, the teacher skilfully used questioning, discussion and shared writing to help pupils to acquire a secure understanding of the form of instructional writing and generate ideas for the content of their writing. This, coupled with careful checks on pupils' learning, helped pupils to produce assured writing within this form.
- Teachers apply the school's marking policy consistently. As a result, pupils are developing a secure understanding of what they need to do to improve their learning and they actively use this feedback to make their work better. This policy has, however, not yet secured close enough monitoring of pupils' spelling, punctuation and grammar.
- Homework is set regularly and pupils describe how this helps them to develop their understanding of learning covered in class, or improve their spelling and number skills.
- The views of pupils testify to the improved profile of teaching within the school. Older pupils describe how teachers now inspire in them an enjoyment of learning and how more challenging work helps them to think deeply and is supporting their better progress.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils, parents and staff say that pupils in the school are safe, happy and well looked after. Pupils enjoy school, value their education and most are committed learners.
- Pupils express positive views about their personal development lessons. Older pupils, for example, spoke about how these lessons help them to reflect on and debate important issues including to stay safe when using the internet and using social media, 'stranger danger' and how to maintain a healthy lifestyle. Younger pupils also demonstrate a good understanding of how to keep safe and healthy.
- Assemblies, religious education lessons and participation in enrichment and after-school activities contribute well to pupils' spiritual, moral, cultural and social understanding. Pupils told inspectors how 'meaningful' assemblies were and how they promoted their contemplation of moral lessons. Pupils are taught about the importance of being friendly to each other and to respect those from different backgrounds, religions and cultures. Pupils particularly value the opportunities they have to sing in assemblies and a number have enjoyed performing in front of audiences.
- The school's before- and after-school provision contributes well to the level of care offered to pupils and offers pupils interesting and varied activities that support their welfare and learning.
- An active school council contributes to pupils' understanding of democratic processes. Pupils' involvement in a wealth of local and international charities helps them to develop their awareness of, and contribution to, helping others.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Leaders and managers have been successful in improving pupils' behaviour. A valued and well-understood rewards system has supported improvements to behaviour since the time of the previous inspection. Pupils and parents told inspectors how this helped to motivate pupils and inspired them to achieve well. Pupils' achievements are celebrated in assemblies and these play an important role in championing a culture in which aspirations are high and success is nurtured.
- Pupils' good attitudes to learning in lessons play an important role in the better progress that pupils are currently making. Pupils listen attentively to their teachers, volunteer their ideas with enthusiasm when asked questions and work well with their classmates to develop their learning. Pupils who spoke to inspectors during the inspection and those who responded to the pupil questionnaire said that behaviour in lessons is mostly good.
- In the playground, pupils behave sensibly and enjoy the opportunities they have to play with their friends. Pupils are well supervised by adults and this makes sure that they are safe. Pupils are polite and

courteous to adults and to each other. When pupils move around the school, they do so in a calm and orderly manner.

- The school works very successfully with pupils who present challenging behaviour or those who have entered the school having had a disrupted education in the past.
- Leaders and managers have tackled attendance issues with tenacity. Procedures to promote good attendance are rigorous. As a result, attendance has improved consistently since the time of the previous inspection and is currently better than that of other schools nationally. The proportion of pupils regularly absent from school has reduced considerably.
- Bullying and name-calling are rare and are not tolerated. Any such incidents are dealt with effectively. Older pupils describe a considerable reduction in these incidents following the arrival of the current headteacher and describe how they trust their teachers to 'sort out' any concerns they may raise.
- The views of staff, parents and pupils confirm the good and improving standards of behaviour at the school.
- In a small number of instances, for example when pupils do not have their usual teacher, pupils are less focused in their learning.

Outcomes for pupils

require improvement

- The standards current pupils in Year 6 are working at are not high enough. Too few are expected to secure age-related expectations in writing and mathematics. Although better teaching is quickening the progress of these pupils, historic variations in the quality of teaching have left them with a legacy of underachievement. The lack of these basic skills means that these pupils are not as well prepared as they should be for starting secondary school.
- In other year groups, standards of writing are impeded by a deficit in pupils' spelling, grammar, punctuation and handwriting skills. Pupils lack the foundations they need to write with accuracy.
- In Year 1, instability in teaching has slowed pupils' progress this year.
- Leaders are acutely aware that weak teaching in the past has adversely affected pupils' learning, particularly in writing. Although adjustments to the curriculum have been made and teachers are working hard to help pupils acquire the skills they need, they have not yet succeeded in closing the gaps in pupils' skills.
- However, there are important improvements evident both in published performance information and in the school's records of the achievements of current pupils. For example, last year, the standards pupils attained at the end of key stage 2 rose from well below average in previous years, to broadly match those of other pupils nationally in reading, writing and mathematics. The standards pupils have secured at the end of key stage 1 have also improved over time and were broadly average, if not above average, last year.
- The development of pupils' reading is a strength. Pupils' successful acquisition of phonics is reflected in the sustained improvements in the proportion of pupils securing the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics check. Last year, all pupils attained the expected standard, and overall secured high scores. Younger pupils successfully apply these skills to help them to decode and sound out unfamiliar words. A well-structured reading programme ensures that pupils' skills are built effectively as they move through the school. Consequently, the standards pupils achieved at the end of Year 6 last academic year and the progress they made was broadly in line with other pupils nationally. Across most year groups, pupils currently in the school are making good progress in reading.
- Last year, pupils' achievements in mathematics, though better than in previous years, lagged behind those in other subjects. Leaders have made changes to the curriculum and to the teaching of mathematics to ensure that pupils secure a deeper understanding of mathematical concepts and basic number skills. This work has been successful in improving pupils' progress and attainment across most year groups.
- Disadvantaged pupils are making better progress than they have in the past. For example, last year, the gaps between their attainment in mathematics, reading and writing and that of other pupils nationally at the end of key stage 2 closed to one term, from over a year previously. These gaps have also shown closure over time at the end of key stage 1. Disadvantaged pupils currently in the school are achieving as well as their classmates in reading, but their performance is more variable in writing and mathematics, with gaps widest in Year 6.

- As a result of improved provision and better identification processes, pupils with special educational needs and disability are making better progress and are catching up with their classmates quickly.
- The most-able pupils are benefiting from teaching and a curriculum that offers them greater challenge. The proportion of pupils attaining the highest levels at the end of key stage 1 and key stage 2 has improved over time. At times, however, these pupils are not moved to more difficult tasks quickly enough and this hinders their progress.
- Leaders are checking on the achievements of pupils closely. Systems of assessment have been overhauled to reflect changes nationally and are becoming increasingly refined. Well-coordinated interventions are contributing to pupils' better progress. However, leaders are less clear on how well some groups, such as the most-able pupils, are progressing from their starting points.

Early years provision

is good

- The early years is led well by an effective leader who knows the children well. This leader works successfully with other local schools to develop practice in the setting. Leaders ensure that there are regular opportunities for staff to discuss the learning that takes place across the whole phase. Practitioners are also encouraged to observe one another and ensure they have an understanding of the journey from 'wrap around' provision through to Nursery and Reception. As a result, the quality of teaching is improving, and standards are rising.
- Staff visit family homes and other settings before children join the Nursery or Reception to ensure that they have an accurate picture of children's skills before they start. Leaders use this information to identify any emerging gaps in children's skills and adapt their teaching accordingly to help children to catch up.
- Children make quick gains from their starting points. Children enter the Nursery or Reception with skills that are below average for their age. Children settle to learning quickly and opportunities to develop their reading, writing and mathematical skills are carefully planned for. A strong focus is also given to their personal, social and emotional development. As a result, children make good progress from their different starting points. The proportion of children securing a good level of development has been broadly average. This academic year, children's learning journeys demonstrate that they are on track to achieving standards above those of other children nationally on leaving the early years. This shows the positive impact of good leadership and good teaching.
- Relationships between adults and children are very positive. Children understand what is expected of them and are quick to respond to requests from adults. As a result, their behaviour is good. A variety of creative activities stimulate children's interest and engagement so that they learn well. For example, learning around the themes of bears and space inspired children's curiosity. Children were enthusiastically engaged in opportunities to write invitations and build rockets with two-dimensional and three-dimensional forms that helped them to improve their understanding of shape.
- Adults help children to make progress by asking skilfully selected questions and they offer prompts to challenge children to think about their learning. This timely support also informs a robust and detailed assessment system. The school uses children's learning journeys effectively to build up a secure bank of evidence of the progress that children make over time. These systems are used with consistency across the setting and are understood well by the team. Observations of children's learning are frequent and are accompanied by photographs and examples of work that children produce. As a result, leaders and other adults working in the early years have a secure understanding of how well children are doing and what needs to be done to further improve their learning.
- Children enjoy learning in an environment that is bright and inviting and has been enhanced by several changes to the outdoor learning area. Children particularly relish learning during 'forest school' activities in the 'Spinney'. During the inspection, work was underway to build 'mini-beast hotels', reflecting leaders' determination to continue developing the quality of provision.
- Parents speak enthusiastically and positively about the early years. The 'wrap around' provision is well attended and adults work hard to involve parents and carers in life in the early years. This work has fostered a high level of engagement over the year and practice has been developed to reflect the thoughts and feelings shared by families at meetings and through questionnaires.
- Gaps between disadvantaged children and their classmates are demonstrating positive signs of closure this year, as a result of effective interventions.
- Safeguarding is effective. Children are well cared for and staff have a very good knowledge of child protection policies and procedures.

School details

Unique reference number	124271
Local authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	10012408

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	2–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	176
Chair	Sue Whitehouse
Headteacher	Johanna Nickolls
Telephone number	01889 256 106
Website	www.churchfield.staffs.sch.uk
Email address	office@churchfield.staffs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	7–8 May 2014

Information about this school

- Churchfield Church of England Primary School is a smaller-than-average primary school.
- The majority of pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is lower than other schools nationally.
- There are more boys than girls in the school.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium funding is above the national average. This is additional government funding for pupils known to be eligible to receive free school meals or children looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs is slightly below the national average.
- The school provides a breakfast and after-school club known as 'Churchfield Cherubs'.
- The school offers part-time Nursery for children from the age of two upwards; in addition, it offers provision for children who want to stay for the whole day as part of their 'Little Scholars' programme. Children in the Reception class attend full-time.
- In 2015, the school met the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection team observed 12 lessons or part lessons, including examples of teaching in every year group. In addition, inspectors looked at pupils' books in a range of subjects and year groups to establish the progress and quality of their work over time.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, senior leaders, middle leaders and governors. Inspectors also met with a representative from the local authority who works with the school.
- Inspectors spoke informally to a number of parents and carers at the start of each school day to gauge their views of the school. In addition, inspectors took account of 15 recent responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire (Parent View) and analysed 12 responses from the staff questionnaires.
- Inspectors talked with groups of pupils as well as individual pupils during their lessons and at playtimes to find out their views about the school.
- The inspection team heard pupils read and observed their behaviour in lessons and around the school.
- The inspection team looked at a wide range of documents, including the school's self-evaluation, the school's plans for improvement, external monitoring reports, records of checks made by leaders and information on pupils' progress and attainment, and records of the meetings of the governing body. They also scrutinised records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.

Inspection team

Chris Chapman, lead inspector

Jonathan Keay

Her Majesty's Inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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