

Castlechurch Primary School

Tennyson Road, Stafford, Staffordshire ST17 9SY

Inspection dates

23–24 January 2018

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Requires 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

- Disadvantaged pupils' achievement in writing has not improved sufficiently since the previous inspection.
- Learning tasks are not matched well enough to the learning needs of pupils in lessons. Most-able pupils are not consistently challenged.
- Pupils' skills and knowledge in mathematics are not developed well enough in other subjects.
- Teachers' expectations of pupils are not consistently high.
- Systems used to track pupils' progress are not being used effectively by senior or middle leaders to aid faster improvement.
- The quality of teaching is not consistently good throughout the school.
- Monitoring of teaching and learning by middle leaders lacks sufficient precision and rigour.
- Information provided to governors fails to focus enough on the impact senior and middle leaders are having on improving pupils' achievement. This is hindering improvement.
- Early handwriting skills are not taught well enough to help pupils present their work well.
- Feedback provided to pupils is not always in line with the school's assessment and marking policy. It does not help pupils improve their work.

The school has the following strengths

- Early years education is effectively led and managed. It has improved significantly since the school's previous inspection.
- The teaching of reading is effective. Pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, can read well.
- Differences in attainment and progress between disadvantaged and other pupils narrowed in 2017 in reading and mathematics.
- The curriculum is well designed.
- Governors have high expectations. They ask challenging questions of senior leaders to check the quality of education is improving.
- Pupils behave well on the playground and around school. They willingly undertake a wide range of additional responsibilities.
- A strong culture of safeguarding exists in school. Pupils have an effective understanding of how to stay safe because they are taught not to take risks, particularly on the internet.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics by:
 - increasing the rates of progress made by disadvantaged and most-able pupils
 - ensuring that pupils, particularly the most able, are challenged effectively in lessons
 - improving the teaching of early handwriting skills
 - making sure feedback provided to help pupils improve in their learning is consistent with the school's assessment and marking policy
 - extending pupils' use of mathematics in other subjects
 - strengthening teachers' expectations so they are consistently high.
- Increase the impact leaders and managers have on pupils' achievement by:
 - making sure pupil performance information is used more effectively to identify areas for improvement
 - providing middle leaders with sufficient support, skills and time to rigorously monitor pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics
 - giving governors more precise information on the impact of actions taken to accelerate pupils' progress.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Information gathered by leaders and managers to help track pupils' progress is not being used effectively enough to identify areas of concern and to secure rapid enough improvement in pupils' achievements.
- A new system to track pupils' progress was introduced in September 2017. As yet, it contains too little data to be used effectively or to provide an accurate and detailed view of strengths and weaknesses in pupils' progress.
- Pupil progress information kept by the school and presented to inspectors did not match the progress seen in pupils' books or in lessons visited. Books showed better progress than the assessment information. It is therefore difficult for leaders and managers to gain an accurate enough overview of how well individuals and groups of pupils are learning.
- Middle leaders are not currently bringing about fast enough improvement in teaching and learning in their subjects. When checking on progress in books and in lessons, middle leaders do not focus enough on the impact teaching is having on learning.
- Recent training provided for middle leaders in the analysis of nationally published school performance information left them with a thirst to focus on reviewing the progress of groups of pupils in reading, writing and mathematics. This development is in its early days and staff have had too little time to check if additional coaching is being effective.
- Leaders and managers, including governors, are ambitious for pupils. They have high expectations of the work of the school but this is not shared by all members of staff.
- Pupils are taught effectively to respect others and to value diversity. This prepares them well for living in modern Britain.
- Additional funding for disadvantaged pupils is used effectively. In 2017, the differences in the rates of progress they made in reading and mathematics compared to other pupils reduced.
- Sports premium funding for pupils is spent wisely and provides an exciting range of additional clubs for pupils to attend.
- The curriculum is broad and diverse. It provides pupils with opportunities to study a wide range of subjects which are well matched to their interests and imagination.
- Senior leaders and governors have brought about some improvements since the previous inspection, including in the early years and in the teaching of reading. Improvements were not as effective in other areas, such as ensuring that faster progress is made by disadvantaged and most-able pupils.
- The school has benefited from much support provided by the local authority.
- The leadership of special educational needs and early years is good. This is having a positive impact on pupils' achievement in these areas.

Governance of the school

- Governors are highly ambitious for the school. Minutes from their meetings show they ask exceptionally challenging questions of school leaders, holding them to robust account for weaknesses in pupils' achievement. Governors are not prepared to give up and demand answers to help bring about improvement. However, governors do not have an accurate picture of the school's effectiveness. Information provided for them lacks sufficient, precise detail on the impact actions taken to improve pupils' achievement are having. This weakness is further exaggerated by school performance information not accurately reflecting pupils' progress.
- The school breakfast club is appropriately run by governors although it could be more stimulating and exciting for the pupils who attend.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- A strong culture of safeguarding permeates all aspects of school life. Regular meetings take place with a range of outside agencies to ensure that pupils, including those who are more vulnerable, are well supported and kept safe.
- Checks carried out on staff before they join the school are stringent. Records of these checks are maintained meticulously, ensuring that they comply with all legal requirements.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching is not consistently good across the school. Books show the quality of teaching varies between the parallel classes in different year groups.
- The most able pupils are not challenged well enough by the learning tasks they are expected to complete because tasks are not demanding enough, are too easy and do not build on what pupils already know.
- School performance information is not used well enough in teachers' planning. Learning tasks are not consistently well matched to pupils' learning needs or abilities. This slows the pace of learning in lessons.
- In several classes, teachers too readily accept scruffy and poorly presented work from pupils instead of demanding well-presented work that reflects the highest expectations. Early handwriting skills are not taught well, which is hindering pupils' ability to write neatly.
- Learning time is lost in lessons when teachers do not organise time carefully enough. For example, time is wasted when distributing resources or when the purpose of a learning task is too vague.
- Feedback provided for pupils is not always consistent with the school's assessment and marking policy. Returned homework is not always followed up with individual pupils.
- Pupils are given many opportunities to use and apply their writing skills in a range of

other subjects. However, this is not the case in supporting the development of their mathematics skills.

- Where learning is more effective, teachers move pupils onto more difficult learning tasks as soon as they are ready for a greater challenge. Pupils make good progress when their learning progresses at a fast pace.
- Computing is taught effectively and the teaching of music is a strength. In mathematics, pupils are successfully encouraged to learn from their mistakes.
- Small group work, led in many cases by volunteers, is successful in helping pupils who fall behind in reading and writing to catch up.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils are confident in lessons. They are well supported to overcome both social and emotional barriers to learning.
- Older pupils take on a range of responsibilities such as looking after children from the early years at lunchtime. Sports leaders manage the distribution of play equipment at lunchtimes. The school council plays an active part in school life.
- Pupils are reflective learners. This is demonstrated in pupils' theme books, which show their thoughtful responses to topics such as fairness and acceptable behaviour in public.
- Pupils have a thorough understanding of how to keep themselves safe. They say that if bullying does occur, it is resolved rapidly and to their satisfaction by adults in school.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils are polite and well mannered around school. They are respectful of each other and of adults.
- Most pupils display positive attitudes to learning in lessons. Occasionally, a small number of lessons are disrupted by the poor behaviour of a few pupils. However, behaviour is generally well managed by most teachers.
- The proportion of pupils regularly absent from school has been reduced significantly since the previous inspection. This is because of the dedicated and effective work carried out by the inclusion officer.
- Pupils attend school regularly. Their attendance is above average. Some pupils report that they prefer to be in school rather than staying at home because they find it interesting and enjoy school so much.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- From their individual starting points, the progress of groups of pupils remains too

variable in reading, writing and mathematics. This is particularly the case for the most able and disadvantaged pupils, who are not progressing as well as other pupils.

- The difference in the progress made by disadvantaged pupils and others increased in writing in 2017, while it narrowed in reading and mathematics.
- Too few of the most able pupils reach the highest standards in national tests. This is because they are not sufficiently challenged in their learning.
- Reading is taught well. The proportion of pupils in Year 1 reaching the expected standard in the phonics screening check is in line with the national average.
- Pupils' books and observations in lessons show pupils' progress is beginning to accelerate. This means more pupils are on track to reach age-related expectations at the end of this school year.
- Those pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities are making good progress in their learning because of the effective support they receive.
- In 2017, pupils in Year 6 made better progress in mathematics than in reading and writing.

Early years provision

Good

- Children start Nursery with knowledge and skills broadly typically expected for their age. Their communication and language skills are slightly weaker. Children progress well in their learning and development so that by the end of the Reception Year most of them are well prepared to join Year 1.
- The indoor and outdoor classrooms are equipped well to support effective learning. These areas are used to good effect by adults to provide stimulating learning experiences for the children. The early years curriculum is well matched to children's needs. Many opportunities are provided for young children to practise their reading and writing skills.
- Children enjoy participating in a wide range of learning and development opportunities, both teacher-led and child-initiated. Teaching supports their overall development well. Children behave well in the early years. This contributes well to their personal development.
- Leadership of the early years is effective. Safeguarding requirements are effectively met. Children are well cared for by a staff team who have the welfare of each individual child at heart.
- Disadvantaged children progress at least as well as other pupils because their learning and development needs are successfully identified and met by the dedicated staff team.

School details

Unique reference number	124203
Local authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	10042860

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	342
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Andy Mason
Headteacher	Jonathan Jones
Telephone number	01785 334955
Website	www.castlechurchprimary.co.uk
Email address	office@castlechurch.staffs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	12–13 January 2016

Information about this school

- This is a larger than average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium funding is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan is below average.
- The school met the government's floor standards in 2016, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' progress and attainment in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.

- The school meets the Department for Education's definition of a coasting school based on key stage 2 academic performance results in 2014, 2015 and 2016.
- Early years provision is part time in the Nursery and full time in the Reception class.
- The school runs a breakfast club, which is managed by the governing body.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in lessons and parts of lessons. Some of these were observed jointly with the headteacher or deputy headteacher.
- Meetings were held with senior and middle leaders, school staff and the chair of the governing body. The lead inspector also spoke with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors spoke informally to pupils in lessons, during breaks and at lunchtimes. They also spoke with parents and carers at the end of the school day.
- Inspectors scrutinised the pupils' work during lessons and work produced over time in a range of their books. They also listened to a few pupils from Year 1, Year 2 and Year 6 reading.
- Inspectors observed the work of the school and looked at the latest school performance information showing the progress pupils currently in school make.
- Other documentation scrutinised included plans for school improvement, safeguarding information, behaviour logs, attendance records and minutes of governing body meetings.
- Inspectors took account of 47 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View). Inspectors considered 33 free-text responses from parents and 18 responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Declan McCauley, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Janet Tibbits	Ofsted Inspector
Dawn White	Ofsted Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making a complaint about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

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. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/ofsted.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2018