

Inspection of a good school: St Philip's Church of England Primary School

Bloomfield Rise, Odd Down, Bath, Somerset BA2 2BN

Inspection dates: 18–19 September 2019

Outcome

St Philip's Church of England Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

The headteacher, governors and staff work well together to create a safe, inclusive community. They emphasise developing pupils' sense of self, and awareness of the world they live in. World maps and large flags of the different countries represented by pupils at the school are strong visual reminders that here, everyone stands together.

Expectations are high for all. Teachers make sure that pupils learn in all subjects. Staff also create lots of extra experiences that help pupils to develop their values and aspirations. Pupils enjoy their learning. They were proud to show me their work and to talk about their learning.

Pupils are happy in school because staff nurture, respect and value them. A typical comment was, 'Staff care for us and are very kind'. Pupils move calmly around the school, showing that they remember the rule to walk 'silently, sensibly and in single file'.

Learning from the respectful way that adults treat them, pupils care for each other and behave well. They are confident that adults help them when friendship issues crop up. Bullying is rare. When it happens, leaders respond quickly and firmly.

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

Strong leadership ensures that staff are ambitious for pupils and believe in them. The ethos is to encourage and instil in every child that 'you can do it'. For example, staff take it in turns to tell pupils about the favourite books that they enjoyed when they were children. This helps pupils to see reading as a worthwhile, interesting thing to do.

Leaders create a supportive, positive culture for staff. Staff told me that the care and encouragement from senior leaders help them to provide the very best they can for pupils. Teachers and teaching assistants are enthusiastic, and they make learning interesting. Teachers encourage thoughtful discussions about new knowledge. Pupils contribute confidently in lessons because of the calm, respectful classrooms. For example,

when Year 6 pupils discussed their views of different pieces of art by the artist Paul Klee, they listened carefully to one another's different ideas.

Cultural visits to theatres, museums and art galleries that go beyond classroom learning add an extra richness to pupils' experience. This is deliberate. Leaders are clear in their aim to ensure that pupils develop an appreciation of the world and a life-long thirst for new knowledge.

Leaders organise extra help for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). For example, staff have had special training to be able to help pupils who need to settle at school and focus on their learning. Staff also take great care to make sure that any pupils who fall behind, for example in reading, have extra help. This helps these pupils to catch up. By the time pupils leave the school, they are confident readers and learners, eager and enthusiastic for their next steps.

In the early years class, learning is relevant and adds to what children know and can do. Children start to learn phonics as soon as they settle at the start of the year. Staff provide wide and rich learning experiences inside and outside. They emphasise developing a joy and love of reading. Staff tell stories that excite and interest children. This encourages them to read more. Children, including disadvantaged children and those with SEND, develop their knowledge and skills across the different areas of learning. Although most children gain early writing skills, too few write confidently by the start of Year 1.

Leaders ensure that there is a sensible order to the curriculum for all subjects. This work is being developed further. In key stage 1, there is less clarity about the teaching of writing. In addition, the sequence for teaching spelling following on from early phonics teaching is not organised well. Some pupils in key stage 2 do not spell as well as they should.

Teachers do not have quite enough information about what pupils have learned in other years or what they will be going on to learn in the future. Sometimes, this means that teachers do not explain to pupils how their learning adds to what they already know. When this happens, pupils do not gain a deep understanding of new learning.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders make sure that staff have the training and information they need to keep pupils safe. Staff take time to know their pupils well and to notice if they need help. Leaders take seriously any concerns raised and respond to them quickly. Arrangements to recruit new staff are secure. Pupils feel safe and they are safe.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders ensure that teaching supports pupils to gain knowledge and to develop their understanding about the world. Leaders need to continue to develop the curriculum so that teachers can plan lessons that build on pupils' previous learning, helping them to develop a deeper understanding of key concepts.
- The writing curriculum for early years and key stage 1 needs to be clearer. This is so that teachers have better guidance on how to sequence learning in writing. This will help those pupils who are at the early stages of learning to write to develop their writing knowledge. It will also help leaders to check whether aspects of writing have been taught.
- Leaders ensure that there is a well-organised system for teaching phonics to pupils who are at the early stages of learning to read. Most pupils develop their phonics knowledge well, but there is less consistency in how well pupils go on to develop their spelling. Leaders need to establish a better organised system for teaching spelling to pupils as they move through the school.

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 a section 8 inspection of a good school or non-exempt outstanding school. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that the school could now be better than good or that standards may be declining, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will convert the section 8 inspection to a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the second section 8 inspection since we judged the predecessor school, St Philip's Church of England Primary School, to be good in March 2011.

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 Ofsted Parent View information 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.

If you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

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	143560
Local authority	Bath and North East Somerset Council
Inspection number	10111588
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	277
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Chris James
Headteacher	Andrew Joy
Website	www.stphilips-school.org
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- This school is a Church of England primary school.
- On 1 November 2016, St Philip's Church of England Primary School converted to become an academy and joined the Palladian Academy Trust.

Information about this inspection

- I had meetings with the headteacher and deputy headteacher. I also met with curriculum leaders and with teachers. I met with several governors, including the chair of governors. I had a meeting with the chief executive officer of the Palladian Academy Trust and spoke on the telephone to the school improvement adviser.
- I had a meeting with staff to discuss workload. This included a wide range of staff, including teachers, teaching assistants and office staff.
- To inspect safeguarding, I met with the designated leader and deputy leader for safeguarding and the governor who leads on safeguarding. Throughout the inspection, I looked at how well leaders create and maintain a culture of vigilance. I checked that the school's safeguarding policy is in place and understood and implemented by all staff. I talked to staff, pupils, and parents and carers about the school's work to keep

pupils safe.

- I gathered parents' views at the start of the day and took the views expressed on Parent View and the staff and pupil surveys into account.
- I agreed with the headteacher to look at some areas of the school's work in more detail. Together with senior and curriculum leaders, I carried out deep dives into reading, writing and art. Deep dives include a series of connected inspection activities such as discussions with leaders, visits to lessons, work scrutiny, discussions with teachers and discussions with pupils.

Inspection team

Tonwen Empson, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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