

# Inspection of St Christopher's CEVCP School

Bellflower Crescent, Red Lodge, Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk IP28 8XQ

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Inspection dates: 17–18 September 2019

## **Overall effectiveness**

## **Requires improvement**

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The quality of education

**Requires improvement**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Good**

Personal development

**Good**

Leadership and management

**Requires improvement**

Early years provision

**Requires improvement**

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Not previously inspected

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils, staff, parents and carers agree that St Christopher's Church of England Primary School has got better. One parent summed up the views of many by saying: [the school] 'has improved over the last three years in so many ways. Children love being here. This is because of the efforts of leaders and staff. They want to do the best for the children.'

Leaders set high expectations for all pupils to be aspirational about their future. For example, the school's 'aspiration days' encourage pupils to consider what they will do when they are older and what they need to do at school to make sure this happens.

Pupils are well cared for. Positive, nurturing relationships between adults and pupils make sure that pupils feel confident, happy and want to achieve well in all they do. Leaders have worked hard to improve behaviour at the school. Pupils say that better behaviour now means that they can learn well. Leaders and staff act quickly to support and improve pupils' behaviour when it is needed. Pupils say this helps them to think about their behaviour and return to their learning successfully.

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

Leaders and staff have improved the reading, writing and mathematics curriculums. Lessons are better organised over time so that pupils can learn well. Standards in the school are improving.

The improvements in the reading curriculum mean that more pupils now enjoy reading. Pupils use phonics well to read new words. They read, understand and enjoy whole-class books. For example, we saw the Year 5 class enthusiastically reading 'The Viking Boy'. Pupils enjoyed trying to predict what might happen next in the story.

Pupils receive a better organised mathematics curriculum than in previous years. Yet, older pupils are still catching up on essential skills. This is because of weaker teaching and curriculum in the past.

Some subjects, such as modern foreign languages (MFL) and science, are not well developed. Leaders are being well supported by the local governing body and the trust to improve the curriculum for all pupils. However, while leaders work hard, they do not check how well their work is helping pupils achieve throughout the curriculum.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) feel happy in school, enjoy time with friends and behave well, but are not learning as well as they could. Staff do not consider well enough what the pupils already know and can do. Too often, pupils are given activities that do not help them build on their prior learning.

Adults take good care of children in the early years. However, some parts of the curriculum are not planned well. For example, activities for 'explorer time', when children choose their own activities, are not ordered appropriately for children to achieve well.

Pupils at St Christopher's are considerate, kind-hearted and respectful of others. Pupils understand the school values of 'PRIDE': positive, respect, independence, determination and equality. This prepares pupils effectively for their future in modern Britain.

Pupils receive lots of opportunities to be involved with the local and wider community. For example, key stage 2 pupils work with the Country Trust charity. Pupils grow their own food and learn how to cook healthy meals. Pupils understand that healthy eating is important, and how to live a healthy lifestyle.

Staff feel well supported, including those who are new to the profession or who are a short way into their career. They appreciate how much leaders consider their well-being.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The designated leaders for safeguarding are very aware of how to keep pupils safe and any issues in the local area. They train staff well. Staff understand the school's safeguarding procedures. They are quick to tell leaders if they have concerns about any pupils. Leaders act quickly and in the best interests of pupils, and they record their actions meticulously.

Leaders carry out thorough checks to ensure that all adults in school are suitable to work with children. This includes checks on the volunteers who help in school regularly. Detailed records are well kept by the office administrator. The trust oversees the checks and ensures compliance with legal requirements.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- The school's curriculum is not sufficiently well planned and sequenced in many curriculum subjects. This is also the case in the early years. Leaders need to make sure that assessment underpins the curriculum across all subjects. Teachers need to know how effectively pupils are developing the subject knowledge and skills of each subject, and to plan accordingly.
- Leaders do not know precisely enough whether children and pupils are accessing and progressing across the wider curriculum. This is because monitoring is underdeveloped. Leaders need to carefully check and act upon how their actions are improving the curriculum, and pupils' access to it.

- Pupils with SEND are not checked closely to make sure that their needs are met. Leaders need to keep a closer check on the provision to make sure learning is planned, well thought through and modified to meet the specific needs of the pupils.

## 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're 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	142025
<b>Local authority</b>	Suffolk
<b>Inspection number</b>	10110178
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy sponsor-led
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	327
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Peter Maxwell
<b>Headteacher</b>	Caroline James
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.stcprimary.suffolk.sch.uk">www.stcprimary.suffolk.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- St Christopher’s Church of England Primary School opened in November 2016. The predecessor school had previously been judged inadequate and was subject to special measures.
- The school is part of the Diocese of Ely Multi-Academy Trust (DEMAT).

## Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- During this inspection, inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher and the assistant headteacher (who is also the special educational needs coordinator). Inspectors also met with the subject leaders for reading, mathematics and science.
- The lead inspector met with the headteacher to discuss modern foreign languages and the deputy headteacher to talk about other curriculum subjects.
- Inspectors met with the office administrator and the school’s social and emotional mental health team to discuss safeguarding arrangements.
- The lead inspector met with the chief executive officer of DEMAT and members of

the local governing body, including the chair. Additionally, other representatives from the trust joined senior leadership meetings, the governing body meeting and the inspection team meeting on the second day of the inspection.

- The subjects of reading, mathematics, science and MFL were considered as part of this inspection. Inspectors also checked the curriculum provision in other subject areas during the second day of the inspection. Inspectors spoke to curriculum leaders, visited lessons, looked at a range of pupils' work, and met with teachers and pupils. The lead inspector visited phonics lessons, heard pupils read and observed staff reading to pupils as part of guided reading sessions.
- Alongside leaders, inspectors looked at a sample of pupils' books from different year groups and across a range of subjects to evaluate pupils' learning in English, mathematics, science, MFL and throughout the wider curriculum.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils about their experiences of school life and their learning to find out what it is like to be a pupil at St Christopher's School. Additionally, the 27 responses to the online questionnaire for pupils were considered. Inspectors also observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and during breaktime and lunchtime.
- Inspectors joined collective worship for the whole school and for Reception children during the first day of the inspection.
- Inspectors considered the views of parents gathered at the beginning and the end of the first day of the inspection and also took account of the 22 responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire, Parent View, as well as the 21 free-text responses. Inspectors also discussed the school's own parental and pupil surveys carried out by leaders.
- Inspectors took account of the 27 responses to Ofsted's online staff questionnaire and met with staff new to teaching.
- Inspectors scrutinised a wide range of documents, including those related to curriculum planning and development, safeguarding, behaviour, attendance, exclusions, the school's evaluation of its own performance, the school's development plans and the trust's work to support the school.

### **Inspection team**

Tracy Fielding, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Ashley Best-White

Ofsted Inspector

Cassandra Williams

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

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E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
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