

# Inspection of Chesterton Primary School

Brittain Avenue, Chesterton, Newcastle-Under-Lyme, Staffordshire ST5 7NT

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Inspection dates: 10–11 September 2019

## **Overall effectiveness**

**Inadequate**

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The quality of education

**Inadequate**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Good**

Personal development

**Requires improvement**

Leadership and management

**Requires improvement**

Early years provision

**Good**

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Not previously inspected

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

Pupils are safe and enjoy school, but they should be doing much better. Pupils are not making enough progress in reading and their attainment is too low. Too many pupils are unable to read well enough with understanding. This is holding them back in other subjects like science and history. They make more progress in mathematics but could still do better.

The headteacher and staff understand what they need to do to help pupils learn and remember more. Teachers have started to improve the way they help pupils to learn. The headteacher joined the school a year ago. She has made a lot of improvements to pupils' behaviour, safety and welfare.

All staff deal very well with rare incidents of bullying and take very good care of pupils. Parents and carers like the changes made by the headteacher because it helps pupils behave well and learn more in lessons. Inspectors agree, but there are some serious weaknesses for leaders, staff and governors to deal with.

Children in the Nursery and Reception classes achieve well. They have settled into school well and already enjoy sharing ideas and talking about their new story books.

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

The quality of education is inadequate and standards are too low. National assessments show that too few pupils learn to read and write well enough in key stages 1 and 2. This makes it hard for pupils to learn well enough in other subjects of the school's curriculum. Too many pupils struggle to read and write some basic words, so are unable to understand the text or books they are expected to read. Disadvantaged pupils underachieve as their attainment is well below that of other pupils.

When the headteacher took over a year ago, she faced many challenges. The first was to improve pupils' behaviour. Lessons were too often disrupted by some pupils' unacceptable behaviour. Another challenge was to work with governors to appoint staff who could put things right. Strong staff appointments and stable leadership have turned things around. Pupils across the school are now well behaved and attentive in lessons. Parents told inspectors that the school is now safe and orderly. Inspectors agree.

Pupils are now getting better experiences, but leaders have not yet improved the way pupils learn in all subjects. One barrier is pupils' inability to read with confidence and understanding. Teachers are improving the way they teach phonics, but pupils still struggle with reading new or unfamiliar words. Improved teaching of mathematics is helping pupils to achieve better than before. There is still room for improvement though. Teachers do not give pupils enough time to explain how they solve problems. This does not help pupils understand more complex facts about numbers and calculations.

Pupils are not reading enough, but leaders are making improvements. For example, new books introduce pupils to different authors and classic stories. Pupils in Year 6 study the classic poem 'Beowulf', and they find this challenging and exciting. They read with their teacher and classmates to share ideas about the meaning of, what one pupil described as, 'strange words'. Younger pupils in key stage 2 spoke enthusiastically about their history topic on Roman Britain. The pupils remembered some key facts, but their limited vocabulary made it difficult for them to explain the events of that period.

Another barrier to pupils' learning is that the topics they study do not follow on from what they have learned before. In science lessons, for example, pupils in key stage 2 learn about the solar system. However, they do not know enough key information about planets, orbits and stars. These facts had not been taught well enough in previous years.

The headteacher has brought about many improvements over the last 12 months. Leaders now need to focus better on those actions that will have most impact on improving pupils' achievements, such as improving the teaching of reading. Some important actions taken have been very effective. The headteacher and governors strengthened the leadership and provision for special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The new SEND leader has done a great deal to sharpen the individual support pupils receive. Pupils with SEND now make better progress than before.

There are many opportunities for pupils to take on roles such as librarians, monitors and eco-warriors. Pupils support their local community, such as visiting with their teachers some local elderly people as part of work to support a national dementia charity. The staff contribute well to improve pupils' moral and social development. Pupils understand British values, such as democracy, fairness and tolerance. However, leaders are not doing enough to help pupils gain a rich understanding of different cultures, backgrounds and religions.

Children throughout the Nursery and Reception classes achieve well. The children engage in stimulating reading activities. They share books and talk about stories and nursery rhymes. This improves their speech and language development well and builds good reading habits from an early age.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Pupils are kept safe and protected in school. The staff know what to do if they have any concerns to report. Staff are well trained in first aid. The school has a strong pastoral and welfare team. Leaders and staff are successful in gaining the confidence of hard-to-reach and vulnerable families. This has improved pupils' attendance and ensures that they are safe when not in school. Leaders, staff and governors are very committed to the well-being and safety of every pupil and family. This lies at the heart of the school's work.

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

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

- Pupils are not being taught to read well enough. Too many pupils struggle to read words they do not know because the teaching of phonics has been ineffective for many years. Too many pupils lack the confidence to read independently because they have not been taught the skills they need to decode or break down words. This hampers their ability to read with understanding in the wider curriculum. The school needs to make sure that all pupils learn to read accurately and with full understanding. Teachers and support staff must continue improving the teaching of phonics so that many more pupils reach the expected standard in key stage 1. In key stage 2, the school must offer pupils more opportunities to read more and experience a broader vocabulary, so that the pupils can learn more words and read with confidence and understanding.
- Pupils do not have all the basic number skills and knowledge they need to tackle more complex problems in mathematics. Leaders need to make sure that all pupils learn the necessary basic skills to help them explain or show how they have solved problems or calculations.
- The school's curriculum is not planned well enough to help pupils build on what they have already learned. Pupils do not know enough words or the vocabulary of each subject of the national curriculum. The school has not yet given enough thought to this in the past, so pupils are not acquiring the necessary knowledge and understanding they need to do better in every subject, such as science and history. The school must provide better opportunities in lessons for pupils to learn the key skills, knowledge and vocabulary specific to each of the subjects of the national curriculum.
- The school's curriculum does not provide enough opportunities for pupils to learn about different faiths, customs and cultures. The school must address this so that pupils have a broader knowledge and appreciation of different customs, cultures and world religions.
- Disadvantaged pupils are not making enough progress in their learning. Their attainment is too low at the end of key stages 1 and 2, and this must be addressed so that it matches that of other pupils nationally.
- Leaders and governors are not using the school's development plans well enough to focus more on improving teaching and learning. Leaders, governors and the trust need to pay more attention to checking which actions in the plans have the most impact on improving pupils' achievements.

### 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>	143345
<b>Local authority</b>	Staffordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10111695
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	2 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	152
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Roy Dutton
<b>Headteacher</b>	Stella Formosa
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.chestertonprimary.org.uk">www.chestertonprimary.org.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- Chesterton Primary School became an academy in September 2016. The school joined a multi-academy trust (Collective Vision Trust). The trust is responsible for the management and oversight of three primary schools and one secondary school. The predecessor primary school was maintained by Staffordshire local authority and was inspected in September 2012. That inspection judged it to be a good school.
- This is the school's first inspection since becoming an academy. There have been many changes to staffing and leadership since then. The current headteacher joined the school in September 2018.
- Early years provision comprises a Pre-nursery class for two-year-old children, who attend part time in the afternoons; a Nursery class for three-year-olds, who attend part time or full time, and one Reception class for four- and five-year-olds, who all attend full time.
- Most pupils with SEND have moderate learning difficulties, including speech and language and/or emotional and behavioural difficulties.

## Information about this inspection

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

In accordance with section 44(2) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than it might in all the circumstances reasonably be expected to perform.

- Inspectors held discussions with the chief executive of the trust, the headteacher and teachers responsible for managing English, mathematics, science, history, SEND provision and the early years. The lead inspector held a meeting with two governors who are also members of the trust's board. A meeting was held with an attendance welfare officer who is commissioned by the trust to meet with families and ensure that pupils are safe when not attending school.
- The lead inspector spoke with an administrator to check safeguarding and staff vetting records. He also met with two of the school's designated safeguarding leaders to judge the effectiveness of child protection and safeguarding procedures.
- Inspectors spoke with some parents to seek their views about the school and analysed the 14 responses to the online survey, Parent View. Inspectors considered the 22 responses from staff to Ofsted's online staff questionnaire. Inspectors also talked with leaders and staff to gauge their views about the support they receive and their workload.
- Inspectors gathered information and engaged in a range of inspection activities to judge the school's quality of education. To do this in some depth, inspectors focused on reading and the teaching of phonics, as well as in-depth investigations into mathematics, history and science.
- To gather evidence, inspectors visited parts of lessons in all classes. Many visits were made jointly with the headteacher and the teacher responsible for managing SEND provision. Inspectors looked at samples of pupils' work for mathematics, science and history.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils during lessons. They met with four groups of pupils from key stages 1 and 2 to hear them read and to discuss their views about the school, their work, behaviour and safety. Inspectors spoke to pupils during break and lunchtimes to ask them for their views about the school.
- Inspectors also considered a range of documentation, including leaders' evaluations of the school's effectiveness, the school's action plans and documents relating to governance, attendance, exclusions, behaviour, parent surveys and the trust's scheme of delegation.

## Inspection team

Charalambos Loizou, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Janet Tibbits

Ofsted Inspector

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