

Inspection of St Denys Church of England Infant School, Ibstock

Laud Close, Ibstock, Leicestershire LE67 6NL

Inspection dates: 3–4 October 2019

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Early years provision **Good**

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy and are kept safe at this inclusive school. The school's ethos of, 'each one of us is different, each one of us is special', is evident. Pupils describe their school as, 'fantastic, amazing and glorious!' Staff expect pupils to work hard and behave well. Incidents of poor behaviour or bullying are rare. Pupils told inspectors that adults treat them fairly.

The St Denys 'bees' encourage pupils to be, for example, kind, optimistic and curious. This ensures that pupils are developing strength of character. Singing is particularly celebrated. Pupils' favourite assembly song is, 'I won't give up, I won't give in.' Pupils are polite. Many cheerily greet visitors and hold doors open, allowing adults to pass. Pupils develop their artistic and sporting talents through various after-school clubs. Pupils in Year 2 enjoy an annual residential visit to Sherwood Forest.

The majority of parents and carers are positive about the school. One parent typified this, saying, 'The school has enabled my child to flourish and built their individual confidence.'

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

Leaders have made sure that subjects are well planned and sequenced. For example, in science, pupils in Year 2 have a good understanding of what humans need to survive. This builds on their prior learning about parts of the body in Reception, and the senses in Year 1. It is helping pupils to know more and remember more. Teachers use assessment to find and fill gaps in pupils' knowledge.

Mathematics is also well designed. For example, teachers plan activities for pupils to improve their problem-solving skills. Teachers encourage pupils to explain and justify their answers. Teachers appreciate the support and training they receive from the mathematics subject leader.

Typically, subject leaders' plans do not show the key words that pupils should know and understand by the end of each topic or year.

The teaching of early reading and phonics is strong. There is a consistent approach that starts in early years. Adults have received good training. They ensure that pupils often revisit previously learned sounds and words. Pupils' reading books are at the right level of challenge. Adults quickly spot those pupils who fall behind and give them the help they need to catch up. This has helped results in the Year 1 phonics check to rise recently.

The curriculum is ambitious for all pupils. This includes disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Staff make sure that pupils who attend the communication and interaction unit are fully integrated into the main school. There are helpful links with the speech and language and autism

outreach teams. Staff use the training they receive for pupils with SEND well.

Leadership in early years is strong. There are useful links with local nurseries. This means that staff know children and their families well before they start. Children are kept safe in a well-resourced and stimulating environment. Relationships between adults and children are warm and positive. Children behave well and take part enthusiastically in a range of activities.

The early years curriculum is well planned. There are the same high aspirations for all children. Staff are aware of the Year 1 curriculum and prepare children well for it.

Rates of attendance throughout the school are high. Persistent absence is low, and pupils arrive on time.

Pupils are increasingly well prepared for life in modern Britain. For example, they understand voting and the rule of law. Not all pupils have a strong enough knowledge of faiths and cultures that are different from their own.

Senior leaders are sensitive to staff workload. The governing body has a good range of skills and experience. Governors are beginning to hold school leaders to account. They do not yet have a good enough understanding of the curriculum and how it is sequenced and planned.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Safeguarding leads and all staff have received up-to-date safeguarding training. There are clear procedures for staff to follow if they are concerned about the welfare of a pupil or family. Detailed child protection records are kept. Advice from outside agencies is sought promptly when required. This includes the early help team and social care.

Pupils know how to keep themselves safe, including when they are online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have not incorporated key subject vocabulary into subject plans. Pupils do not know the important words they need in order to build on their previous learning in each subject. Subject leaders need to plan each subject in a sequential way. Leaders' and teachers' plans must be clear about what pupils should know, remember and understand by the end of each topic and year.
- Not all pupils are prepared well enough for life in modern Britain. Their knowledge of faiths and cultures different from their own is not as good as it should be. Leaders need to make sure that this learning is built into the

curriculum for every year group.

- The new governing body knows the school's strengths and weaknesses. It has been particularly good at checking the use and impact of the pupil premium funding. However, governors do not yet know enough about the intent, implementation and impact of the curriculum. They need this to hold senior and subject leaders fully to account for the school's quality of education.

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

Unique reference number	120138
Local authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	10110072
Type of school	Infant
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	244
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Kate Chaplin
Headteacher	Cortina Newton
Website	www.stdenysschool.com
Date of previous inspection	9 October 2018

Information about this school

- The school has several new teachers and governors, including the chair, who were not present during the previous full inspection in November 2014.

Information about this inspection

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

- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, deputy headteacher and the leaders responsible for disadvantaged pupils, pupils with SEND, early years, phonics, science, mathematics and music. They met with five members of the governing body, including the chair, and a newly qualified teacher. A telephone conversation was held with a representative from the local authority.
- The inspection team undertook deep dives into mathematics, phonics and early reading, science and music. A deep dive entails talking with the subject leader, visiting lessons, talking with pupils and teachers, and examining work in pupils' books, all from the same subject.
- When inspecting safeguarding, an inspector met with the designated safeguarding lead and several members of staff. The safeguarding policy, training

records and examples of safeguarding concerns were scrutinised.

- The inspection team examined a wide range of documentation, including the school development plan, self-evaluation, curriculum plans and information relating to pupils' attendance and behaviour.

Inspection team

Peter Stonier, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Karen Lewis

Ofsted Inspector

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