

Inspection of The Bishop's Church of England Primary Academy

Canterbury Way, Thetford, Norfolk IP24 1EB

Inspection dates: 8–9 October 2019

Overall effectiveness

Inadequate

The quality of education

Inadequate

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

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?

The quality of education for pupils attending The Bishop's Church of England Primary Academy is inadequate.

Teachers' expectations of what pupils should achieve are not consistently high enough. Where expectations are highest, such as in the early years and key stage 1, pupils make a good start to their education. However, this is not the case in key stage 2. As a result, pupils are not achieving well in reading, writing and mathematics.

Pupils told us that they like coming to school. They said that they make friends easily. We saw pupils being orderly and calm around the school building. Leaders provide lots of things for pupils to do during the lunch hour. This encourages pupils to play together and behave well during these times. However, some pupils' behaviour is not as good as it should be in the classroom.

Pupils' attendance is starting to improve. Leaders closely track how well different groups of pupils are coming to school.

Pupils feel safe at school. Parents and carers agree with this and consider that staff look after their children well. Pupils said that sometimes bullying does happen. They know what to do if they were to be bullied. Pupils are confident that adults will effectively deal with any of their concerns.

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

In too many subjects, including reading and writing at key stage 2, leaders' planning does not identify what pupils need to know. Curriculum plans are not clearly structured. They do not identify what pupils should know at key points in different subjects. The failings in the quality of education means that too many pupils are not achieving what is expected for their age.

Teachers do not have a consistent understanding how to plan a sequence of lessons. Plans do not build on what pupils have learned before. Consequently, pupils do not remember important facts and are often confused about what they are learning. For example, in a key stage 2 class, pupils could not answer questions about a text because they did not understand the meaning of inference.

In mathematics, weaker teaching in the past has led to gaps in pupils' knowledge and skills. Leaders' new plans are starting to address these gaps. This is having more of an impact in key stage 1. However, teachers' subject knowledge and understanding is underdeveloped. Teachers do not check that pupils apply what they know to explaining and solving mathematical problems.

The teaching of early reading is effective. Children start learning phonics when they begin school. They quickly pick up the initial sounds that letters make. The school's

reading champion ensures that adults use a consistent approach to teaching phonics. Adults spot when pupils struggle with their reading. Additional sessions are provided so that pupils keep up with their classmates. Pupils use their phonics knowledge to read books that are well selected to improve their reading accuracy and fluency. However, pupils are not given sufficient opportunities to build on these strong foundations in key stage 2.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) receive effective support. Adults support these pupils well. This helps pupils to meet their personal targets identified on their plans.

Disadvantaged pupils benefit from the approaches used to support their early reading. However, other aspects of the curriculum have not been considered well enough to ensure that disadvantaged pupils make secure gains in their knowledge and skills.

Pupils wear their uniforms with pride. They are keen to talk about their achievements and learning. Pupils enjoy positive relationships with adults. Many pupils willingly follow adults' instructions. However, some pupils told us that behaviour is not always good in the classroom. Where teaching is less effective, pupils do not concentrate as well as they should.

Pupils fulfil different roles in the life of the school. For example, pupils can volunteer to be play leaders or assembly monitors. Pupils are aware of the school's core values. However, leaders do not provide enough opportunities to promote pupils' understanding of different cultures. Pupils learn about faiths and beliefs. Nonetheless, they do not develop a good understanding of the different cultures that exist in modern Britain.

Leaders have taken time to tackle weaknesses in the school. They are now acting to improve the school. Some leaders are new to their positions. The trust is ensuring that these leaders develop the skills that they need to develop the curriculum. Leaders are better placed to make the necessary improvements. The trust is working effectively with the recently established governing board to ensure that leaders make rapid improvements to the school.

Despite weaknesses in the school's quality of education, the early years is securely good. Teachers create a buzz of excitement about learning among children. Leaders plan interesting activities that promote children's curiosity, imagination and play. Children use these activities effectively to improve their speaking, learn about numbers and to understand more about the world. Adults have high expectations of children's behaviour. Clear routines ensure that children listen to each other and play safely. Leaders have planned the curriculum so that meets children's needs. For example, tasks designed around a shared book helps children to talk about the story and its characters when they use the role play area.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Safeguarding is a high priority for leaders and staff. Systems are well established and appropriate measures are in place to ensure pupils' safety.

Leaders' records for checking the suitability of staff, volunteers and visitors are well maintained. Governors make regular visits to ensure that the records are up to date.

All staff receive regular training about safeguarding matters. Staff are alert to any signs that pupils may be at risk of harm. Adults understand how to respond to worries that pupils may share with them. Leaders encourage staff to record all concerns. Leaders regularly review concerns and take swift action to ensure that pupils get the help that they need.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The curriculum for different subjects, particularly reading and writing at key stage 2, is not well structured. Leaders need to identify key components of knowledge that pupils need to learn and the order in which they need to learn them. Leaders must ensure that teachers understand how best to check and use pupils' prior knowledge so that they are able to tackle new ideas. This is to ensure that pupils' knowledge is built over time and helps them to remember more.
- In mathematics, teachers do not systematically check that pupils have a secure understanding of the concepts that they are learning. Leaders should ensure that all teachers have the subject knowledge that they need to implement leaders' plans for mathematics successfully.
- Until recently, leaders have not acted swiftly enough to improve the school. Leaders should ensure that the training being provided will help curriculum leaders have a clear understanding of what a good-quality education looks like. Curriculum leaders must know how they will check and monitor that this is in place.
- Disadvantaged pupils have gaps in their learning. They are not achieving as well as they should. This is because the teachers do not have high enough expectations of their learning. Leaders need to adapt the curriculum so that it better meets the needs of disadvantaged pupils and helps them to make stronger progress.
- Pupils do not develop a good understanding of cultures that are different from their own. This is because the curriculum does not provide pupils with opportunities to promote their understanding of different cultures in modern Britain. Leaders should ensure that the curriculum develops pupils' cultural development more widely.
- Pupils' behaviour and attitudes, although stronger aspects of the school's

provision, are not yet good. Where teaching and the curriculum are weaker, a minority of pupils can become distracted and disengaged. Additionally, the attendance of pupils at the school, although showing signs of improvement this year, remains low. Leaders need to ensure that these emerging strengths are further embedded, so that pupils' attitudes to learning in lessons and their attendance improves.

- Leaders may appoint newly qualified teachers.

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	142633
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	10110179
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	409
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of the trustees	Willie Crawshay
Headteacher	Dan Pickard
Website	www.bishop.norfolk.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The Bishop's Church of England Primary Academy is a Church of England faith school located in the Diocese of Norwich. The religious character of the school was inspected under section 48 of the Education Act (2005) and was judged to be good.
- The school converted to become a sponsor-led academy on 1 November 2016.
- The Bishop's Church of England Primary Academy is a member of the Diocese of Norwich Education and Academies Trust.
- The Bishop's Church of England Primary Academy is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils who are in receipt of free school meals is in the top 20% of all schools nationally.
- The school manages a breakfast club.

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 met with the headteacher, the deputy headteachers, the leader of the early years and the inclusion leader. Inspectors held discussions with two members of the local governing board and members of the Diocese of Norwich Education and Academies Trust, including the chief executive officer.
- During the inspection, inspectors carried out deep dives into early reading, mathematics, writing, physical education and history. This included discussions with leaders of each subject, visits to lessons, discussion with teachers, scrutiny of pupils' class books and discussions with pupils.
- Inspectors examined a wide range of safeguarding documentation, including that relating to attendance and behaviour, the single central record and records of staff training. Inspectors spoke about safeguarding with the designated leader of safeguarding, other school leaders and teachers, including a newly qualified teacher.
- Inspectors spoke with parents at the start of the school day. Inspectors also took account of the 18 responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire, Parent View, as well as the eight free-text responses. Inspectors also considered the 14 responses to the online staff survey. Inspectors spoke with pupils at playtimes and lunchtimes.

Inspection team

Steve Mellors, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Jo Nutbeam	Ofsted Inspector
Julie Harrison	Ofsted Inspector

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