

Inspection of a good school: Priory CofE Primary School

Jubilee Road, Trentham, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire ST4 8EF

Inspection dates: 19–20 November 2019

Outcome

Priory CofE Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are proud of their school and learn a lot. They do well in a wide range of subjects, especially music. Pupils enter local competitions and gain success in these. This helps them grow in confidence and have high expectations for what they can achieve.

Pupils get on well with each other and with staff. They talk to visitors in a mature and confident way. Behaviour around the school is excellent. Pupils know that bullying of any sort is unacceptable and that teachers would stop it if it happened. They feel safe in school.

Pupils take part in a wide range of activities: girls' football, art and pottery clubs are popular. Pupils talk about their enjoyment of a range of trips and visits. These include a trip to see Father Christmas and a visit to a local pottery factory.

There are many opportunities to take on extra responsibilities throughout the school, school ambassadors, the 'Rights Respecting Squad' and being part of the e-safety council to name a few. Pupils enjoy these important roles.

Leaders have high expectations of pupils. The school is inclusive. It provides excellent guidance for families who need extra support.

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

Children in the Nursery and Reception classes make a good start. This is because the learning environment is well organised. Children are responsible for getting out their own equipment. They make their own choices. This helps them become increasingly independent. Children learn inside and outside of the classroom. The early years leader is very knowledgeable and ensures that things are in place to keep the children safe.

Phonics lessons start when children join the school and take place every day. Most pupils are reading fluently by Year 3.

Well-trained staff provide extra help to anyone who finds reading hard. Pupils study high-quality texts. Teachers read often to pupils and pupils enjoy this. Pupils also take part in 'Boogie Beats', where they visit a local residential home for senior citizens. Here they read stories to residents and sing to them.

Teachers use their enthusiasm to plan and deliver lessons well in other subjects. They make sure learning is practical and relevant for pupils. Work matches pupils' different abilities. Most-able pupils, and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are well catered for. A range of resources help pupils understand key ideas and learning. This is particularly the case in mathematics. However, pupils are not yet confident to solve problems in mathematics.

Music is a strength of the school. Pupils have regular music lessons. There is the opportunity to learn to play a tuned instrument, such as a ukulele, as they progress through the school. The school choir performs to a high standard. For example, I listened to a performance of 'Can you feel the love tonight?' from the Lion King. Pupils love to sing.

The school has recently introduced a new assessment system. This looks at the knowledge pupils have gained in each subject. Pupils are less secure at remembering key vocabulary and making links between subjects. The new system plans to address this, but currently it is too early for leaders to evaluate its effectiveness.

The school is well led. Leadership skills at all levels are developed through a system of coaching and support for staff. Staff work together for the benefit of all. A focus on staff well-being and reducing workload has strengthened the team. For example, there is an after-school yoga club for staff which is well attended.

'Bruce', the school's dog, ducks, chickens and other school pets encourage pupils to care for animals. Pupils feel this makes their school unique and special. Opportunities to look after these pets are just one of many ways pupils learn how to be responsible citizens.

Parents and carers say good things about the school. They are particularly pleased with the way pupils play and interact with each other around the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is a strong culture of keeping children safe throughout the school. Staff and leaders follow the proper processes if they have concerns about a pupil. Staff training is up to date. Governors fulfil their duties and take their responsibilities seriously.

Pupils learn to manage risks. They know about 'clever never goes' with strangers. The Royal National Lifeboat Institution teaches pupils about being careful when playing in and around water. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe in a range of situations.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school has recently introduced 'Key Knowledge Points' (KKPs). These set out the knowledge pupils are expected to know in each subject and year group. However, KKPs don't highlight where pupils' learning and vocabulary from other subjects are relevant. Leaders need to check that pupils can make links between their learning in other subjects. This will enable pupils' knowledge to become more secure in all subjects.
- The school has a strong mathematics curriculum which has already had an impact on standards in arithmetic and number. However, pupils' skills in solving problems are less secure. Leaders need to ensure that pupils can clearly articulate how they have solved a problem and if this was the most efficient way of doing it.

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 first section 8 inspection since we judged Priory CofE Primary School to be good on 29–30 April 2015.

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	132240
Local authority	Stoke-on-Trent
Inspection number	10088541
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	431
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Edwin Lewis
Headteacher	Pam Keen
Website	www.prioryceprimary.org.uk/
Date of previous inspection	29–30 April 2015

Information about this school

- The early years is made up of a Nursery and two Reception classes.

Information about this inspection

- I focused on the following subjects during the inspection: reading, mathematics and music. I visited lessons, looked at pupils' work and examined teachers' plans. I talked with pupils and staff about the way these subjects are planned and taught. I looked at work from other subjects and spoke with pupils, staff and parents about the school.
- External performance data about the school was examined and I looked at the school's website.
- Pupils, staff including the school's business manager, leaders, parents and governors were spoken to about safeguarding arrangements and routines at the school. I examined the record of employment checks on staff.
- I watched pupil behaviour in class and at other times of the day and spoke to parents, staff and pupils about behaviour.
- During the inspection, I had formal meetings with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher who is also the special educational needs coordinator, governors, teachers

and pupils. I also talked to pupils and parents to gather information about school life.

- By the end of the inspection, there were 47 recent responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View. I considered these and looked at the 40 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire for staff.

Inspection team

Heather Phillips, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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