

Inspection of a good school: Prees CofE Primary School

Cross End, Prees, Whitchurch, Shropshire SY13 2ER

Inspection dates:

26–27 November 2019

Outcome

Prees CofE Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils say that their small school feels like a family. Parents and carers agree. Pupils arrive at school smiling and keen to learn. Staff know the pupils and their families well, and many parents are past pupils. There is a strong connection to the community.

Leaders set high expectations. The Christian ethos and school values of trust, honesty, respect, generosity, friendship and kindness help pupils understand how to treat others. Most pupils behave very well. They are polite and kind to each other. A few pupils struggle to concentrate in lessons, but staff manage this well in most classes.

Most pupils leave the school with their reading, writing and mathematics skills at least where they should be for their age. Pupils talk enthusiastically about what they have learned, for example in science and history.

The school prioritises pupils' well-being and personal development. Pupils enjoy many opportunities to develop interests beyond the classroom. Staff run lots of after-school clubs every day. Football, netball, rugby, cross-country running and orienteering are just a few of the activities on offer. Many pupils take part in local sports competitions and they frequently win. The school has achieved the gold School Sports Award in recognition of its work promoting well-being through physical activity.

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

In reading, mathematics and science, learning is well planned so that pupils remember their learning over time. Subject leaders provide good support for teachers to plan and teach these subjects well. Leaders have the right plans in place to review the curriculum in other subjects and these are well underway.

In most classrooms, there is a real buzz about learning. Pupils read often in school and at home. They love reading. Teachers make sure that children learn to read quickly, building up letters and sounds week by week. They spot if any pupils fall behind and step in to

help them. Struggling readers are well supported to catch up. Leaders make sure that the books pupils read are well matched to the sounds they are learning. Older pupils have a wide range of exciting books to read in the freshly stocked library. Younger readers enjoy reading to their reading buddies every week.

Leaders have revised the mathematics curriculum this year, designing it carefully to fill gaps in pupils' knowledge and skills and make sure these do not happen again. The curriculum is now planned carefully so that pupils build their knowledge and skills in a logical sequence. They practise their skills regularly so that they can recall and apply them more easily to different problems. Teachers are developing their understanding of this new approach, although some are more confident than others. They say the revised curriculum has helped everyone to rediscover a passion for mathematics. As a result, pupils are now making stronger progress in mathematics than they have done in the past.

Pupils love science. They enjoy finding out about the world around them and love learning how to think like a scientist. They use scientific vocabulary confidently to explain their thinking and how to set up a reliable experiment. Pupils described with enthusiasm how fossils form and how fossils and rocks are different. Pupils were so inspired by this topic, they talked excitedly about being fossil hunters when they grow up.

In the early years, staff establish clear expectations and routines which help children settle in the school quickly. Engaging activities help children to learn through doing. In science, they tried different ways to wash their hands to find the best way. They predicted which would be the best: hot or cold water, with soap or without. Teachers make sure that children learn lots of new words every week. This helps those children who start school with weaker language and communication skills and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

The majority of pupils love learning, and they are fully engaged in lessons. However, a small minority of pupils sometimes lose concentration. Some teachers do not manage this consistently well.

Beyond lessons, pupils play an active part in the life of the school and the wider community. The school supports pupils' social and personal development well. Worship council members work closely with the local church to plan worship together. Local residents regularly come into the school for lunch with pupil ambassadors. Older pupils act as reading buddies for younger pupils. This helps pupils to understand how they can make an active contribution to life in modern Britain.

Governors know the school well and take an active part in school life. They try to ensure that teachers' workload is manageable.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders make sure that staff receive regular updates and training in safeguarding. As a result, staff are vigilant and raise any concerns about pupils' welfare promptly. Staff know

the community and its families well. When pupils or parents need a bit of extra help, for example to get to school on time, the learning mentor supports them well. Staff attend local network meetings to keep up to date with safeguarding advice and guidance.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders' plans to revise the curriculum are well under way. In subjects where the curriculum is well planned and implemented, pupils are achieving well and standards are improving. Leaders should ensure that the curriculum is planned and implemented consistently well in the remaining subjects.
- Leaders set high expectations for pupils' behaviour. If behaviour slips, most pupil respond well when staff remind them what is expected. However, some teachers do not consistently uphold these expectations. They do not establish effective classroom management routines. As a result, learning can sometimes be disrupted. Leaders should ensure that behaviour is consistently well managed in all classes.

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 the predecessor school, Prees CofE Primary School, to be good on 6–7 December 2012.

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	143323
Local authority	Shropshire
Inspection number	10111716
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	186
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Michael Cladingbowl
Headteacher	Nicola Brayford
Website	www.prees.shropshire.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Prees CofE Primary School became an academy in December 2016.
- It is part of the Field Multi Academy Trust (MAT).
- Whixall Primary School is also part of the MAT.
- The executive headteacher took up her post in January 2017. She has responsibility for both schools in the trust.

Information about this inspection

- I met the executive headteacher and other leaders to discuss the curriculum and the quality of education.
- I met the designated senior leader for safeguarding, the SEND coordinator, subject leaders, teachers and pupils.
- I met the chair of trustees. I also met a parent governor, and the chair and vice-chair of the local governing board.
- I considered reading, mathematics and science in detail as part of this inspection. I met subject leaders, visited lessons, spoke to pupils and teachers and reviewed pupils' work

in each of these subject areas. I reviewed curriculum plans for a range of other subjects.

- I listened to pupils read in lessons and in separate meetings. I met with pupils who benefit from reading initiatives such as Reading the Game and spoke to Year 5 and 6 pupils who are reading buddies.
- I considered 13 responses to the staff survey and took account of staff's views on workload and well-being in meetings.
- There were no responses to the pupil survey, but I spoke to pupils and observed behaviour in lessons, on the playground at breaktime and in the dining hall at lunchtime.
- I reviewed a range of documents on the school's website prior to the inspection. During the inspection, I read minutes of meetings, checked safeguarding records and looked at curriculum planning and policies.
- I considered 26 responses to Ofsted's Parent View questionnaire, along with 17 free-text responses. I spoke to parents who were attending mathematics workshops in the school.

Inspection team

Jane Spilsbury, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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