

Inspection of a good school: West Chinnock Church of England Primary School

Scotts Way, West Chinnock, Crewkerne, Somerset TA18 7PU

Inspection date:

17 June 2021

Outcome

West Chinnock Church of England Primary School continues to be a good school.

However, inspectors have some concerns that one or more areas may be declining, as set out below.

What is it like to attend this school?

West Chinnock Church of England Primary School is a small, welcoming, and friendly school. Pupils enjoy coming to school. They say they are lucky to attend the school.

Pupils play well together at social times. New arrivals to the school say they are welcomed and settle in quickly. Pupils feel safe. They say that staff look after them well. Bullying is rare but pupils say that when it does occur, staff deal with it quickly.

Pupils enjoy reading and visiting their new library. Younger pupils are enthusiastic about reading, but the phonics curriculum does not consistently help them to secure the essential early reading skills. In some subjects, pupils do not learn important content in a way that would help them to make sense of their work.

Pupils learn about different cultures and beliefs. They say they understand and accept people's differences. Pupils have opportunities to develop their interests and skills. They are keen to learn about gardening and to take on responsibilities in school. Sporting activity is important to pupils. They enjoy taking part in sports clubs and competitions. They say their school is known as the small school that always turns up and takes part.

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

The headteachers are ambitious for the school. They have made changes that strengthen leadership and build capacity. Staff are proud to work at the school. They feel listened to and say leaders consider their workload.

Leaders are beginning to make some important changes that prioritise the teaching of reading. They have developed a new early reading programme to improve pupils'

fundamental knowledge and skills. However, staff have not yet been retrained to teach the phonics programme. This means that teaching lacks precision. There are inconsistencies in how well phonics is taught and how secure pupils are in their phonic knowledge. Leaders are in the process of ensuring books match the reading programme so that pupils' phonic knowledge is closely matched to the books they read.

Older pupils enjoy reading but some of them lack confidence in their reading knowledge and skills. Pupils who are behind with their reading receive support to catch up. However, there is not a consistent approach to how teachers develop pupils' reading over time. Leaders have recently organised additional support for pupils as part of a national tutoring programme. Pupils say this is helping them to become more confident readers. Leaders are keen to continue this additional support as part of a school-wide reading programme.

The curriculum planning in mathematics is more advanced than in other subjects. The subject leader has developed a curriculum that helps pupils become secure in their mathematical knowledge. For example, mental-mathematics work is carefully sequenced and builds on what pupils know and can do already. However, sometimes teachers' choice of activity does not help pupils to learn important knowledge. For example, younger pupils are sometimes given many choices within an activity, which can distract them from the mathematical knowledge they need to learn.

Leaders are developing subject leadership roles to strengthen the wider curriculum. Subject leaders are beginning to design and implement new curriculum plans. Nevertheless, these are not yet fully in place. In history, for example, content does not build on what pupils have learned before, so pupils do not have a secure grasp of the subject.

Pupils behave well around the school. They are orderly and cooperative. Staff and pupils treat each other with respect. However, older pupils say that sometimes, their learning is affected by the behaviour of others. In the early years, the organisation of the curriculum and improved indoor space are helping children to learn and play well together.

Teachers know pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) well. Pupils with SEND are receiving the additional support they need. The recently appointed special educational needs coordinator is developing teachers' expertise. However, sometimes, the curriculum is not ambitious enough for pupils with SEND. Teachers do not match the curriculum precisely enough to what pupils can do.

The headteachers are supported by an enthusiastic governing body, who know many aspects of the school well. Governors are keen to develop a better understanding of the curriculum, so they are better informed to support and challenge leaders' decisions.

In discussion with the headteachers, we agreed that the implementation of the reading programme across the school, developing a well-sequenced wider curriculum and strengthening SEND provision, may usefully serve as a focus for the next inspection.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Pupils know how to keep themselves safe, including online. Pupils trust staff and say there is always someone to talk to if they need help.

Staff know pupils well. They use the school's safeguarding system appropriately. They report concerns in a timely way to the designated safeguarding lead. Leaders secure the right support for vulnerable pupils.

Leaders, governors, and staff are well trained. Governors have a good understanding of local issues and safeguarding. They are kept well informed, ask pertinent questions, and carry out regular checks.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have recently introduced an early reading curriculum. However, this is in its infancy. Leaders need to ensure that all who teach phonics have good-quality training so that they teach it consistently well. It is important that resources match the reading programme so that pupils' books match their phonic knowledge.
- The curriculum is not yet fully developed in a number of subjects. Leaders have not identified the essential knowledge that pupils need to learn and the order in which they need to teach it. Leaders need to make sure the curriculum is planned carefully and sequenced logically so that it builds on previous learning. This will help pupils to have more secure knowledge.
- The curriculum for pupils with SEND is not ambitious enough. Leaders need to develop the expertise of staff in identifying pupils' needs early. Leaders also need to work with subject leaders to develop a more ambitious curriculum for pupils with SEND.

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 or outstanding school. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that a good 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 second section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good on 30 March 2011.

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 information from Parent View 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 the school and 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 [here](#).

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	123820
Local authority	Somerset
Inspection number	10196713
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	5 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	56
Appropriate authority	Local authority
Chair of governing body	Simon Roughsedge
Headteachers	Liz Stiddard and James Caswell
Website	http://www.westchinnockprimary.co.uk/
Date of previous inspection	21 April 2016, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- West Chinnock Church of England Primary School is a smaller-than-average school. It is a member of the Norton and West Chinnock Federation. There have been several changes to staffing since the last inspection.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school, and have taken that into account in their evaluation.
- Inspectors met with the chair of governors and representatives from the governing body. The lead inspector spoke on the telephone with a representative from the local authority and a representative from the diocese of Bath and Wells. Inspectors met with the headteachers, curriculum leaders, the special educational needs coordinator, and staff.
- Inspectors did deep dives in early reading, mathematics, and history. They visited lessons, looked at pupils' work, talked with pupils, listened to pupils read, discussed the curriculum with leaders, and examined documentation.

- Inspectors met with the designated safeguarding lead, examined school records, and discussed safeguarding cases.
- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted’s online survey, Parent View, including 19 free-text comments. They also considered 13 responses to the staff survey.

Inspection team

Tracey Reynolds, lead inspector

Her Majesty’s Inspector

Lydia Pride

Her Majesty’s Inspector

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