

Inspection of St Nicholas' Church of England Middle School

Main Street, Pinvin, Pershore, Worcestershire WR10 2ER

Inspection dates: 8–9 June 2021

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Previous inspection grade

Inadequate

What is it like to attend this school?

St Nicholas' Church of England Middle School is an improving school. It is welcoming and inclusive. It is a happy school, where people get on. Pupils show tolerance and understanding of people's differences. Pupils are safe and well cared for. Incidents of bullying are very rare, but pupils say that if it does occur, teachers deal with it quickly.

Senior leaders have worked hard to improve the quality of education that the pupils receive. Staff now expect pupils to achieve well and pupils are rising to these expectations. Teaching has improved and pupils remember, and build on, what they are taught. Subject leaders have started to develop their subjects. There is still more to do to ensure that pupils experience well-planned and sequenced learning in all subjects.

Pupils' behaviour allows learning to happen. Across the school, there is a consistent approach to managing behaviour. Pupils recognise this. A pupil's comment summed up the views of many when they said, 'We don't get away with things anymore, which is good. It means we can learn.'

Most parents and carers are pleased with the education that the school provides. However, a few say that there is still work to do. Senior leaders acknowledge this and are working to communicate more effectively with parents.

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

The headteacher has established a purposeful workplace, where workload and well-being are prioritised. There is a shared vision among staff. Senior leaders, including governors, have tackled the root cause of weaknesses, with effective support from the trust. Behaviour, attendance and the quality of education have improved. However, subject leaders are in the early stages of leading their subjects. They do not yet have a secure overview of their subjects across the school. Senior leaders recognise that subject leaders need to receive additional training and support to be able to lead their subjects more effectively.

Senior leaders have prioritised improvements in reading, writing and mathematics. Teachers' subject knowledge was highlighted as an issue at the last inspection, so leaders quickly put training in place to address this. Staff's subject knowledge has improved significantly as a result. There are consistent approaches to the teaching of reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils read regularly in school. Teachers choose books that are challenging and motivating for pupils to study.

Leaders are reviewing how learning is organised. Although plans have been put in place, subject leaders have not yet considered the 'big picture' of what pupils learn across their time in school. Therefore, not all subjects are as well planned and sequenced as they should be. In addition, there is variability in how well the plans are implemented. Not all teachers are ensuring that pupils remember what they

have been taught. This is partly because some teachers do not yet use assessment wisely enough to check pupils' learning and to adapt the learning if needed.

The provision for pupils with special education needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is effective. The special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) makes sure that teachers know and understand pupils' needs and what support pupils require. This means that pupils with SEND are making much better progress and are able to access learning alongside their peers.

Leaders make sure that pupils are well prepared to be good citizens. Pupils take pride in their school and the local community. They learn to accept others from a variety of backgrounds and how to value differences. All pupils are welcoming and respectful. Pupils understand how they can give their views through the student parliament. However, pupils cannot always remember what they have learned in the curriculum about faiths and other cultures.

Pupils develop their confidence and independence. Pupils talk fondly about the annual residential visits in which they take part. These include visiting an outdoor education centre, a creative arts residential trip and a trip to France. Although these have been paused due to the pandemic, leaders are passionate about running these as soon as they can.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have ensured that safeguarding is a priority for all staff. Staff have completed a wide range of safeguarding training. All staff know how to raise concerns if they have them. Detailed record-keeping shows that staff follow reporting procedures well. Leaders work closely with external agencies to keep vulnerable pupils safe. Staff are tenacious in ensuring that pupils and families receive the support they need.

Pupils are taught how to avoid the possible dangers they might face outside school. They learn how to keep themselves safe, including when online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have overhauled the curriculum because pupils' learning across the school was not secure. There are now clear plans for each subject. However, these plans are not sequenced well enough in all subjects. As a result, pupils do not progressively build on their knowledge in those subjects. Leaders should ensure that cohesive plans are in place across all year groups, and that these are carefully thought through, so that pupils' knowledge builds over time.

- Many subject leaders are new to their role. Senior leaders have supported subject leaders in developing curriculum plans, and improvements are evident. However, inconsistencies remain. Subject leaders need to have a deeper understanding of how to monitor, evaluate and review their subject, in order to check that curriculum plans have the intended impact.
- Pupils do not yet have a strong understanding of what they have learned. This is because teachers and teaching assistants do not have strong enough pedagogical knowledge to deliver the curriculum. In addition, the effectiveness of staff's checks on what pupils remember are inconsistent. Leaders should ensure that teachers and teaching assistants consider the most effective approaches to delivering the curriculum and how to assess pupils' learning.
- Pupils are respectful and understanding of differences. However, they do not always remember the knowledge that they learn about faiths and other cultures. Leaders should ensure that they promote diversity through planned and sequenced opportunities in the curriculum, so that pupils develop a deeper knowledge of different faiths and cultures.

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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 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.

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	144257
Local authority	Worcestershire
Inspection number	10184739
Type of school	Middle deemed primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	9 to 12
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	282
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of governing body	Trevor Knight
Headteacher	Sandra Jennings
Website	www.pinvinfed.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	4 and 5 February 2020, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Diocese of Worcester Multi Academy Trust (DOWMAT).
- The school uses alternative provision provided by Aspire Academy. Ofsted inspects this provision separately.
- A Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) inspection to evaluate the distinctiveness and effectiveness of St Nicholas' Church of England Middle School as a Church of England school took place on 14 June 2016.
- The school has a breakfast club operating on the site. The school manages the provision.

Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We deemed the inspection a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

In accordance with section 13(5) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement.

- Inspectors met with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, SENCo, curriculum leaders, and the chair and vice-chair of the school local academy board.
- Inspectors also met with the chief executive officer and other representatives of DOWMAT.
- Inspectors examined a range of school documentation, including leaders' self-evaluation, published information on the school's website, the school's statement of action, improvement plans, and documentation relating to pupils' attendance and behaviour.
- Inspectors considered the 79 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, including 62 free-text responses, and considered 27 responses to the staff survey. Team inspectors met with parents at the start of the day.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in reading, mathematics, writing, science and French. This included visiting lessons, looking at pupils' work, meeting with senior and subject leaders, and discussions with teachers and pupils.

Inspection team

Eve Morris, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Mike Onyon

Ofsted Inspector

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