

Inspection of a good school: Creech St Michael Church of England Primary School

Hyde Lane, Creech St Michael, Taunton, Somerset TA3 5QQ

Inspection dates:

5 and 6 October 2021

Outcome

Creech St Michael Church of England Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Creech St Michael is a caring school that puts the needs of children at the heart of all they do. Adults and pupils alike commented on the kind and thoughtful atmosphere in the school. A number of families who had been through difficult times said how supportive the school was of them and their children. Pupils say the school has a great atmosphere where everyone seems really happy. Parents are rightly confident that their children are safe, sound and looked after well.

Pupils say this is a fun school. They get along well together indoors and outside throughout the day. Pupils say that bullying is very rare. Parents agree and say that their children are happy and behave well.

Pupils do well in the school, particularly in reading and mathematics. They say teachers make the lessons interesting for them and that this helps them to remember important information. However, not all subjects are as strong as reading and mathematics. Leaders know this and are working with staff to improve the quality in other subjects.

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

The teaching of early reading is a strength. Children in the Reception Year and key stage 1 make good progress because of the high-quality teaching they receive from support staff and teachers alike. All adults delivering phonics sessions are trained well and receive ongoing support to make sure they are suitably skilled. As a result, lessons are brisk, and pupils learn the knowledge they need quickly.

The recent focus on pupils becoming more fluent readers is paying dividends. By checking that pupils understand the meaning of words and the importance of punctuation, all pupils are becoming stronger readers. This includes pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), or those pupils who may have fallen behind.

The excellent early start to reading is built on in key stage 2, where most pupils become very fluent readers who love books and stories. However, the support for older children who are hesitant readers is not as rigorous as it is for younger pupils. This means that some pupils in key stage 2 do not get the practice and support they need to become confident readers quickly.

Led by the headteacher, staff have worked together to improve the whole curriculum. They have identified what they want pupils to know in each subject and have considered how best to teach it to the pupils. This is leading to staff having a clearer understanding of what pupils need to learn and when they need to learn it. When staff know precisely what pupils need to learn, lessons are focused, and pupils gain a greater understanding of the subject. This is seen clearly in history, for example, where pupils consider why the Romans' first two attempts to conquer Britain failed. Teaching like this succeeds because the teachers have identified exactly what the pupils need to know and then make sure they learn it. The impact of this approach can also be seen in reading and mathematics.

Pupils benefit from a broad curriculum that extends beyond academic subjects. The caring culture in the school is developed through regular opportunities for pupils to develop their spiritual, social, moral, and cultural development. Leaders and governors regularly consider the needs of staff and take steps to ensure their well-being.

There are effective systems in place to identify and support pupils with SEND and those who have fallen behind. As with other areas of the curriculum, the most successful support identifies precisely what pupils need to know and adopts a step-by-step approach to help pupils catch up. Although this precision is common in some subjects, it is not yet present in all subjects. This is because curriculum planning is not precise enough. Consequently, some lessons are overly complicated, making it very difficult for all pupils to gain the knowledge they need. This is particularly the case when subjects are combined.

To ensure that pupils make strong progress, staff have rightly identified the need to ensure that the mathematics curriculum begins in the Reception class and continues until pupils leave at the end of Year 6. However, this is not yet the case for all other subjects. This means that, in some subject areas, there is no link between children's early learning in school and that in later years. As a result, pupils do not reach the standards they could.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and governors give the well-being and safety of pupils a high priority. Staff know what to do when they have a concern about a pupil and are trained to recognise signs of neglect and abuse. Leaders work well with other agencies to make sure that pupils and their families get the help they need. Staff ensure that pupils learn how to keep themselves safe. As a result, there is a strong culture of safeguarding within the school.

Staff, leaders and governors understand the importance of pupils' well-being and mental health. Together they give this a high priority in the school.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- What pupils need to learn is not yet precisely identified in all subjects. This means that pupils do not always gain the knowledge that they need. Leaders should ensure that, from Reception to Year 6, staff know exactly what pupils need to learn and when they will learn it.
- The support for less confident readers is not consistently rigorous across the school. Older pupils who are not strong readers do not catch up as quickly as they should. Leaders should ensure that pupils in key stage 2 get the practice and support they need to develop the higher reading skills so that they are fully prepared for the next stage in their education.

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, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, 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 deem the section 8 inspection as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in April 2016.

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 Ofsted 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.

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	123793
Local authority	Somerset
Inspection number	10199723
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	277
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Annette Cox
Headteacher	Jan McCarthy
Website	www.creechstmichaelprimary.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	27 and 28 April 2016, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

The school is part of the Church of England's Diocese of Bath and Wells. The most recent section 48 inspection took place in July 2019.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken this into account in his evaluation of the school.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: mathematics, reading and history. For each deep dive the inspector met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspector met with pupils, staff, senior leaders and members of the governing body. The inspector also spoke with parents and representatives from the local authority and the diocese.

- To inspect safeguarding, the inspector considered safeguarding records and spoke to pupils, staff and governors. The inspector scrutinised the single central register, which records the safeguarding checks carried out on adults working at the school.
- The inspector considered the 47 responses to Parent View, the Ofsted parents' survey.

Inspection team

Phil Minns, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates:
<http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2021