

Inspection of a good school: Christ Church CE Academy

Deighton Road, Deighton, Huddersfield, West Yorkshire HD2 1JP

Inspection dates:

1 and 2 December 2021

Outcome

Christ Church CE Academy continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a caring and inclusive school. Leaders provide help and support for families who need it. Leaders have thought carefully about how pupils are taught so that all pupils can access the work that they are given.

The 'proud pupils' in Year 6 are helpful role models for other pupils in the school. These pupils check that others are walking through corridors sensibly. They help younger pupils tie their laces or find other games to play. Pupils are kind and considerate to each other. In lessons, they work well together to discuss ideas or take part in practical activities.

Since all pupils have returned to school following the period when schools were only open to some children due to COVID-19 restrictions, some pupils have struggled to manage their behaviour. Leaders have identified this and have trained staff in how to support pupils when this happens. Staff are skilful in helping pupils to calm down when they get angry. Pupils say that incidents happen more than they would like, but that teachers act quickly and fairly when they do happen. Pupils do not have concerns about bullying.

Pupils enjoy their time outside in the forest school. A specialist teacher teaches them about nature and how to persevere with tasks that are difficult.

Pupils are taught relevant knowledge in their personal, social and health education (PSHE) lessons. Older pupils know how to manage their money and the importance of making good decisions about their own health.

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

Leaders are ambitious for all pupils in the school. When designing curriculum plans, leaders have thought about how pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) will be successful. Pupils with SEND are taught well. Teachers use teaching methods that benefit these pupils as well as their peers.

In mathematics, leaders have adopted a curriculum that builds up pupils' knowledge step by step. Teachers use resources such as counters and whiteboards to help pupils understand new concepts. They explain concepts clearly to pupils. Leaders know that it is important that pupils return to what they have done in the past and this is planned for. Teachers make sure that pupils practise mathematics that they have learned in the past so that they can remember important information such as number bonds or division facts.

Leaders have brought in a new early reading curriculum. They have ensured that all staff have the training that they need to teach this curriculum well. Staff appreciate this training because it is helping them teach pupils to read more effectively. Staff can choose books for children to read that are matched to the sounds that they have been taught. Staff spot when pupils cannot read a specific sound or word and give them support quickly to prevent them from falling behind.

In subjects such as history and computing, leaders have written curriculum plans that build up the knowledge that pupils need. These plans start from Nursery, and teachers in the early years understand their role in improving the knowledge of children so that they are ready for Year 1. However, leaders recognise that there is still work to do on plans for subjects other than English and mathematics. What pupils are taught in one year group does not link well enough with what they learn in the next year group. For example, in history, pupils get better at remembering when different civilisations such as the ancient Greeks or Romans happened but do not get better at comparing what life was like in each of these periods. Teachers do not plan vocabulary based on words that pupils have already been taught. This means that opportunities are missed for pupils' knowledge and word bank to build as well as they could.

Teachers' subject knowledge is strong across most subjects. Teachers know what the important knowledge that they want pupils to remember is. They then question pupils to check what pupils know. Teachers use questions very well because their expectations of pupils' responses are so high. Pupils use full sentences and speak with confidence and understanding when they speak to teachers.

Teachers prepare practical activities that pupils enjoy. Pupils taste Mayan food or round up numbers using large hoops in the hall. However, these are not just for novelty. Teachers make sure pupils understand what they are doing by teaching them the knowledge that they need before taking part in the activity. Pupils with SEND and pupils who speak English as an additional language are particularly successful in their learning through these methods.

Staff in the early years have been well trained to support children's speaking and listening. Staff are focused on the early communication needs of pupils, such as talking in full sentences or listening to the sounds in words. Children in Reception get off to a good start in their phonics learning through effective teaching. The environment in the early years is well matched to the planned curriculum. However, expectations for children's vocabulary knowledge and the books and stories teachers will use to develop this are not planned as precisely. Children are not improving in their spoken language as well as they could.

Leaders have an accurate understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in the school. They share their evaluations with governors and trustees. Governors ask robust and challenging questions of leaders. They come into school and meet with leaders to 'take the temperature' of what is happening. Governors are well informed and support the improvements that leaders need to make. Trustees keep an effective overview of what is happening. They put in more support when it is needed. In this way, governors and trustees work well with each other to improve the offer for pupils in the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Senior leaders are highly visible members of the school. They stand at the gate at the start and end of each day. This helps parents to talk to them if they have any concerns. Leaders spot if something is not quite right and can support families accordingly.

Leaders' record-keeping is exemplary. Comprehensive records are kept of all vulnerable pupils. The checks that leaders carry out on staff, governors and trustees to ensure that they are suitable to be in the school are precise and robust. No one is allowed in school unless all the necessary checks are completed.

Leaders train staff to know what the risks for children in their school may be. For example, staff have a good knowledge of the signs that may indicate that children are being groomed to take part in criminal activity. All staff go to one of the leaders for safeguarding if they have a concern. Leaders recognise that staff training and systems for reporting peer-on-peer abuse need improving. Leaders are taking steps to put these in place.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Curriculum plans in the foundation subjects are less well developed than in the core subjects. Knowledge and vocabulary from one year group do not link cohesively with those of other year groups, so pupils forget or misremember information. Leaders should plan out the vocabulary that is needed in each subject for each year group. They should add more detail to their curriculum plans so that vertical concepts such as power and democracy or online safety are threaded effectively through them.
- Leaders have not planned out the books, stories and rhymes that teachers should use to develop and extend children's language precisely or deliberately enough in the early years. Children are not building up sufficient knowledge of stories or words as they move through the early years. Leaders should plan out the important texts and vocabulary that they want children to know and ensure that these build from Nursery to Reception, and then on into Year 1.

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 October 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	138584
Local authority	Kirklees
Inspection number	10200162
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	223
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	The Venerable Peter Townley
Headteacher	Lisa Walton-Thorpe
Website	http://www.christchurchcofeacademy.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	4 and 5 October 2016, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school uses Engage Academy, a pupil referral unit, as alternative provision for pupils. This provision is registered with Ofsted.
- The school has a Nursery class for three- and four-year-olds that is open each morning.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, members of the governing body and the chief executive officer of the Enhance Academy Trust. He had a phone conversation with a representative of the Diocese of Leeds and spoke to two trustees via a video call.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics 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 also looked at curriculum plans in computing and PSHE with the subject leader for each.
- The inspector checked the school's single central record to see what checks leaders carry out on staff working in the school. He spoke to the designated safeguarding lead about how they manage concerns about children's safeguarding and checked the records that leaders keep.
- The inspector checked the plans for pupils not attending school full time or who had been recently excluded. He checked the parental involvement in these plans.
- The inspector spoke to staff and pupils about what school is like and how supported they feel by teachers and leaders.
- The inspector spoke to some parents outside the school and evaluated the results of the pupil and parent surveys. The inspector checked paper copies of responses to the staff survey.

Inspection team

Matthew Knox, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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