

Inspection of a good school: William Cassidi Church of England Aided Primary School

Morrison Street, Stillington, Stockton-on-Tees, Cleveland, TS21 1JD

Inspection dates:

12 and 13 January 2022

Outcome

William Cassidi Church of England Aided Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils feel happy and safe in this welcoming school that 'goes the second mile'. The school's Christian values of 'love, care and respect' are at its heart. Pupils enjoy time with their friends and say that they help each other. Pupils know that if they have problems or concerns, they can go to a member of staff who will help. Bullying is rare and dealt with quickly and effectively. Adults give the few pupils who need it helpful support to make the right choices in their behaviour.

Pupils respond well to the high expectations for behaviour and learning set by leaders. This includes pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). There is a calm, respectful environment in each class, including early years. Pupils are motivated by the rewards systems, such as earning Cassidi coins which they can choose to 'spend' or donate through the school 'bank'.

Pupils like to learn new topics. They talk knowledgeably about what they have studied. Pupils also enjoy reading and being read to by adults. Adults make reading to pupils a priority. Pupils benefit from the wide range of clubs and experiences on offer. For example, the school offers clubs, such as mindfulness, football, and calligraphy. Pupils say that they are learning to manage their anxieties through mindfulness.

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

The headteacher and governors have a very clear vision for the school. They know the strengths and areas for development. Leaders continually evaluate the curriculum. For example, the school's programme for teaching mathematics did not provide teachers with the opportunity to revisit previous learning frequently enough. Leaders introduced an additional programme to ensure pupils rehearse core number facts and regularly revisit previous topics. This is giving pupils the knowledge and confidence to solve problems and reason mathematically.

Leaders are determined to ensure the curriculum supports pupils to achieve well and develop life skills. They have focused on making sure the curriculum meets the needs of pupils through the challenges brought about by the pandemic. Across all subjects, including in the early years, the curriculum is planned and delivered so that pupils can build on what they have learned before.

Leaders make sure reading is a priority. The well-established programme for teaching phonics begins in Nursery. The teaching of phonics is clear and consistent. Staff know how to model sounds clearly and correctly for children. The headteacher teaches phonics every morning and models high expectations. The approach to teaching phonics continues systematically throughout pupils' first years in school, so that they become confident readers. Adults check children's progress in phonics and reading regularly. This identifies pupils who are at risk of falling behind so that they can be provided with additional help to catch up quickly. There are regular story times which pupils say they enjoy. The library is well stocked and provides pupils with books that connect to the topics they are learning. For example, pupils say they enjoy learning about the differences between the UK and China.

The effective teaching of art and design techniques is enabling pupils to produce work of a high quality from the early years to Year 6. For example, pupils in Year 1 produced detailed self-portraits whereas pupils in Year 6 built on their knowledge of drawing portraits to produce abstract self-portraits, showing their personalities in pictorial form. End goals and subject-specific vocabulary for each year group are still being mapped out. This means that some older pupils lack confidence when discussing and evaluating their work.

Assessment is used in lessons to inform teaching so that teachers are quick to notice when pupils struggle with their work. Teachers make adjustments to the curriculum when pupils need extra time to practise and understand important content. Assessment helps teachers to identify pupils who need support to catch up. Although assessment is embedded across the curriculum, in subjects other than reading, assessment does not give accurate enough information about specific knowledge that pupils have remembered.

Pupils with SEND are fully included in lessons and all aspects of school life. When pupils need extra support with their work, staff are quick to provide bespoke resources and adapt the curriculum to meet needs. This is helping pupils with SEND to integrate well and access all areas of learning. As local needs change, leaders are quick to seek the right support for pupils.

Staff enjoy working at the school and feel well supported by leaders who help to reduce their workload. During the pandemic, there have been challenges to the school providing professional opportunities for staff to develop their roles. Leaders have worked together to ensure leaders new to their roles have received the support they need.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is a strong culture based on care. The staff team know the pupils and their families well. This means that they are swift to identify causes for concern. Regular training enables staff to fulfil their responsibilities in keeping pupils safe.

Leaders are tenacious in seeking help for families, when needed. They refer concerns to outside agencies. Leaders show strong attention to detail. The headteacher's records of actions taken in response to concerns are systematic and thorough.

Leaders ensure that the appropriate recruitment checks are completed for adults who work in the school.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have planned the content and sequence of knowledge of the whole curriculum. However, in some subjects, such as art and design, end goals and subject-specific vocabulary are still being mapped out. As a result, some pupils cannot recall subject-specific vocabulary and are unable to build upon this knowledge later. Leaders should continue to refine and embed curriculum planning so that pupils' vocabulary builds year on year.
- In some subjects, assessment does not provide detailed enough information about the knowledge that pupils have learned. As a result, there are gaps in pupils' knowledge. Leaders need to review their systems of assessment so that teachers gain a better understanding of what pupils know and can do.

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 February 2017.

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	111720
Local authority	Stockton-on-Tees
Inspection number	10211449
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	143
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Colleen Peters
Headteacher	Mrs Julie Cornelius
Website	www.williamcassidi.eschools.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	21 February 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The number of pupils attending this school has decreased since the last inspection.
- The school is a Church of England voluntary aided school. The last Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools under section 48 of the Education Act 2005 took place in June 2018.
- The proportion of pupils who join or leave the school at times other than usual is higher than average due to migration into and out of the area.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.
- The out-of-school day care for three- to 10-year-olds closed in May 2021.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The lead inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and has taken that into account in her evaluation of the school.
- The lead inspector carried out deep dives in the following subjects: early reading, mathematics and art and design. For each deep dive, she met with subject leaders,

looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and scrutinised samples of pupils' work.

- The lead inspector looked at the single central record and checked the school's systems for monitoring and reporting safeguarding concerns. She met with the designated safeguarding lead.
- The lead inspector met with the special educational needs coordinator to help evaluate SEND provision and practice in the school. The lead inspector reviewed individual plans for pupils with SEND, to evaluate how well these are being implemented.
- The lead inspector spoke with a range of staff and pupils to find out what it is like to be a pupil, or to work in this school.
- The lead inspector met with the chair of governors, vice-chair of governors and two foundation governors.
- The lead inspector reviewed key documentation, including the school's self-evaluation form, school action plans, governors' minutes, and monitoring records.
- The lead inspector checked all survey responses, including those from pupils, staff, and parents. This included taking the 30 responses to Ofsted's free-text service into account.

Inspection team

Kathryn McDonald, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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