

Inspection of a good school: Bishop Aldhelm's Church of England Primary School

Winston Avenue, Branksome, Poole, Dorset BH12 1PG

Inspection dates:

2 and 3 February 2022

Outcome

Bishop Aldhelm's Church of England Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

The school's mission statement, 'Loved by God: United in Learning', pervades everything that takes place. Pupils' respectful behaviour shows the care they feel for each other. Staff model clear expectations for pupils' behaviour. If any pupil finds regulating their behaviour difficult, staff support them successfully.

Leaders have high expectations of staff and pupils. The result is a harmonious school of which the community is proud. There are strong links with churches and other places of worship. Leaders celebrate the diversity of the school population.

Staff do all they can to enrich pupils' learning. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, there were 37 clubs for pupils to attend. There are currently 17 back up and running. Subjects are diverse, from learning sign language to sailing. Pupils have visited China, with reciprocal visits from Chinese pupils to extend their global and cultural knowledge. Disadvantaged pupils never miss out on these experiences if they wish to join.

Pupils do not believe that bullying exists in their school. If staff hear of any concerns, they investigate them carefully. Normally, concerns arise from friends falling out with each other. Reconciliation is swift.

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

The headteacher is a committed leader. Staff share his desire to know and support everyone individually. The school's ethos enables staff to work as a dedicated and effective community.

Leaders, supported by the multi-academy trust, are developing a strong curriculum. Children join from the age of three and enter the pre-school. Here, children establish routines quickly and learn new vocabulary through appropriate and interesting activities.

When children start Reception, they begin to learn phonics. As a result of effective teaching, pupils, even the weakest, become fluent readers in key stage 1. Their skills in writing develop well alongside their understanding of letters and sounds. Reading continues to be central within the English curriculum as pupils move through the school. Pupils read texts together that broaden their vocabulary and heighten their understanding of world events. Teachers read stimulating stories to younger pupils that help with articulation and expression. Although leaders have prepared a list of 100 books to read by the end of key stage 2, pupils do not appear to be using this. Pupils read for pleasure, but are not always aiming high enough within their own choices.

Several leaders consider the starting point for their subject curriculum as Reception. Consequently, Reception children have a focused beginning in a range of subjects, which helps them to build on their learning in Year 1 and beyond. Leaders help children to develop curiosity in their learning as soon as possible. However, this feature is rarely seen in the learning of the older pupils. Some leaders have decided what pupils need to know before they enter key stage 3. As a result, pupils have a clear and precise understanding in these subjects about why they are learning certain knowledge at a particular time. However, there is still a minority of subjects in which this is not the case.

With the continuing impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, staff assess pupils' learning frequently. Leaders rearrange curriculums and short-term plans, when necessary, to ensure that pupils catch up with missed work. There are more formal assessments three times a year, which teachers also use to improve their teaching. They use these findings to consider the impact of long-term plans and to adjust them when pupils have failed to grasp a concept.

Teachers' high expectations, to which pupils respond well, ensure that learning takes place without disruption. Pupils, including those who are disadvantaged and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, are proud of their work. Teachers' subject knowledge is strong. They receive regular training for subjects in which they may be less secure, such as art or physical education (PE).

From pre-school to Year 6, staff reward pupils with 'Bishop Bonds' for excelling in any of the school's values: love, courage, unity and inspiration. These count towards the school's house competition. As a result, pupils learn the importance of teamwork to succeed. The school's personal, social, health and economic education provides pupils with a comprehensive knowledge of how to keep themselves and the environment healthy. In addition, pupils learn about local dangers such as riptides, as the school is close to the sea. Leaders are sensitive to the changing nature of communication and keen to ensure that pupils understand their rights. Pupils are developing as responsible citizens of the future.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff receive training that enables them to identify any pupils who may need help and take suitable action. Equally, pupils feel confident about telling a trusted adult in school about any concerns they may have.

Safeguarding leaders work effectively with professionals and external agencies to provide the best support for individuals and families to protect those at risk of harm.

Leaders are trained in safer recruitment practices. The record of recruitment checks shows that these are applied vigilantly.

Pupils learn about safety in the curriculum, including the risks associated with fire, roads and bodies of water, as well as the dangers of the worldwide web.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some subject leaders do not consider carefully enough which crucial concepts pupils need to learn and develop over time. Therefore, teaching does not always build effectively on children's knowledge from pre-school and Reception onwards. Leaders should consider the specific understanding they want pupils to secure so that their knowledge deepens as they move through the school.
- Children in early years show independence, resilience and perseverance in the face of challenge. However, older pupils have fewer opportunities to show these traits within some academic subjects. Leaders should consider how staff can help pupils maintain these attributes in every aspect of learning.

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 a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the predecessor school, Bishop Aldhelm's Church of England Voluntary Aided School, to be good in June 2015.

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	144873
Local authority	Bournemouth, Christchurch & Poole
Inspection number	10212152
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	613
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Alice Wrighton
Headteacher	Scott Tait
Website	www.bishopaldhelms.poole.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Bishop Aldhelm’s Church of England Primary School joined Hamwic Education Trust in September 2017.
- The current headteacher was appointed in January 2020.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

This was the first routine inspection the school had received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders, and have taken that into account in their evaluation.

- Inspectors met with the headteacher, other senior leaders and staff, the trust’s standards officer and the vice-chair of governors. The lead inspector held a telephone call with the diocese’s school improvement adviser and the deputy chief executive officer.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, art and PE. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, visited a

sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning, listened to pupils read and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- Inspectors looked at recruitment practices and checks. In addition, inspectors spoke with the designated safeguarding lead. Inspectors spoke with staff about their training in safeguarding and to pupils.
- The lead inspector spoke with the special educational needs coordinator.
- An inspector took account of responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, including free-text responses, and the pupil and staff surveys.

Inspection team

Kathy Maddocks, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Adam Matthews

Ofsted Inspector

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