

Inspection of Castle Batch Primary School Academy

Rawlins Avenue, Worle, Weston-super-Mare, Somerset BS22 7FN

Inspection dates: 24 and 25 May 2022

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

What is it like to attend this school?

The school has a caring, inclusive ethos. There are strong relationships between pupils and staff. Pupils feel happy and safe in school.

Leaders and teachers have high expectations of pupils. Pupils have positive attitudes to their learning and behave well. They are polite and thoughtful. Pupils say that bullying is not an issue. If they have a problem, they know what to do and are confident staff would deal with it. Parents speak positively about the school and how well it supports pupils.

Pupil voice matters at Castle Batch Primary School Academy. Leaders plan opportunities for pupils to make a difference to the school and feel like responsible citizens. Leaders worked with pupils to plan changes to how activities are organised at playtimes. Pupils told inspectors this made a difference, and they value this. Leaders give pupils positive role models to inspire them. Sports coaches and a Paralympic athlete supported a recent sports week.

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

Leaders have planned an ambitious curriculum to help pupils remember their learning. Subject leaders are passionate about their subjects and check how well their subjects are taught. They identify where teaching can improve and support teachers well to do this. This means that there is consistency in teaching across subjects. Teachers have secure subject knowledge. Leaders know that the curriculum in some subjects is not as fully embedded. They are putting the right things in place to address this.

Pupils are confident to use the subject vocabulary they have learned to talk about their learning. Teachers use feedback effectively to help pupils to improve. They identify pupils at risk of falling behind and those who need to be stretched. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), including those in the resource base, are well supported. Teachers have identified gaps in learning as a result of disruption from COVID-19. They have plans to help pupils catch up successfully.

Children develop early reading skills well. Leaders recognise that they need to improve the reading curriculum to support some pupils to learn phonics more quickly. This work was delayed by the pandemic. This has not stopped leaders from working to improve teaching in phonics.

Transition into Reception is managed well. The curriculum in the early years is sequenced effectively and ensures that pupils are ready for key stage 1. Staff adapt learning activities regularly to meet children's learning needs and interests as they develop.

Leaders, staff and pupils share high expectations for behaviour. These are grounded in the values of the school and are built on celebrating good choices. Pupils who struggle to manage their behaviour are supported well. Leaders work with staff and parents to identify and address the barriers to attendance for some pupils.

Personal development is woven through the curriculum. Leaders urge pupils to attend clubs, where it would benefit them to do so. Many pupils take part in pupil groups and have positions of responsibility. Year 6 pupils wear hoodies of a different colour to denote them as role models across the school. There are expectations that they will model the school values. They also help younger pupils to do this. Leaders recognise that the school community is not very diverse. They are making curriculum choices that will help pupils learn about other cultures.

Over the last few years, there have been changes in leadership and a period of instability. Leaders recognise this. There is now a team of strong leaders in place at all levels. This has had an impact on the culture of the school. Leaders understand their responsibilities. Governors have effective systems in place to check how well the school is doing and to challenge leaders to improve. Staff feel supported by leaders in the school and the trust. The trust allocates resources to help the head of school to keep the focus on the quality of education. For example, the trust provided staff cover for illness and is giving support with the nursery building project.

Parents appreciate the open-door policy and support from the school's SEND and pastoral team. Leaders are already working on the very small number of concerns that parents have raised.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Safeguarding is a high priority. Staff understand their responsibilities. There are appropriate processes in place to identify pupils who may need support. Leaders work well with other agencies. Leaders are rigorous in following up external support. Safeguarding goes beyond care for the pupils and extends to families.

Pupils understand how to raise a concern if they need to. Effective safeguarding training and updates are in place for all staff. Leaders know that in a small number of cases staff reporting is not precise enough.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The early reading curriculum has recently been revised and is not fully embedded. As a result, some pupils are not learning to read as successfully as they could. Leaders need to continue their plans to implement and embed the new systematic synthetic phonics programme so that all pupils can become fluent, confident readers.

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	145630
Local authority	North Somerset
Inspection number	10231301
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	422
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Katie Dominy
Principal	Sally Taylor
Website	www.castlebatch.n-somerset.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Castle Batch Primary School Academy is part of The Priory Learning Trust.
- The school currently uses no alternative provision.
- Castle Batch Primary School Academy converted to become an academy school in April 2018. When its predecessor school, Castle Batch Community Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good overall.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the first routine inspection the school 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 of the school.
- Inspectors held meetings with the head of school, the deputy headteacher, curriculum leaders, the special educational needs and disabilities coordinator and staff. They met with the interim chief executive officer of the trust, the school improvement lead, a member of the board of trustees and members of the governing body.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, science, music and physical education. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers and pupils and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors listened to pupils in Years 1, 2 and 3 read to an adult.
- Inspectors considered how well the school protects pupils and keeps them safe.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school site.
- Inspectors listened to the views of parents at the start of day 2 and considered the responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses.
- Inspectors considered the responses to the staff survey.

Inspection team

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