

# Inspection of Victoria Community School

Victoria Road, Burton-on-Trent, Staffordshire DE14 2LU

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Inspection dates: 12 and 13 July 2022

## **Overall effectiveness**

## **Requires improvement**

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The quality of education

**Requires improvement**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Requires improvement**

Personal development

**Requires improvement**

Leadership and management

**Requires improvement**

Early years provision

**Requires improvement**

Previous inspection grade

Good

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils are happy and enjoy coming to this welcoming school. Pupils are excited about their learning. Staff care for the pupils and want the best for them. However, some pupils are missing valuable opportunities to learn because they do not attend school often enough.

Leaders are ambitious and have high aspirations for pupils. They are working to make improvements to the curriculum. However, in some subjects leaders have not thought carefully enough about what pupils should know and remember. This means that pupils do not learn as much as they should.

Pupils say they feel safe at school. They know there are adults they can talk to when they are worried. Pupils are confident that staff will sort out any incidents of poor behaviour and bullying.

Pupils enjoy activities such as skiing, quidditch competitions and the world music day. They say they would like more of these opportunities. Leaders ensure that all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), are fully included in all aspects of school life. A typical comment from a pupil was, 'everyone has a chance here'.

Parents and carers speak positively about the school. They say that, 'it is like a family here'.

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

The new headteacher has made positive changes in a short time. He has a clear vision and high expectations. Although other staff share his vision, there is still work to do to ensure that these expectations are realised. Leaders have not ensured that the curriculum identifies the specific facts that pupils need to remember.

Leaders have identified inconsistencies in how the curriculum is planned and delivered and how well teachers use the assessment systems. Teachers do not regularly check what pupils know and remember. This means that learning does not always build on what pupils already know. Pupils then find it harder to learn new facts.

Leaders understand the importance of reading. Children in early years experience a wide variety of books, stories and rhymes. However, not all adults have the necessary expertise to teach phonics effectively. The quality of phonics teaching varies. As a result, pupils have gaps in their phonic knowledge which does not help them to learn to read as quickly as they should.

Children are happy in early years. They enjoy their learning and they are proud of their achievements. Adults and children have positive relationships. Children treat

each other with kindness. Teachers plan some activities around children's interests. However, leaders have not considered the knowledge and vocabulary they want children to learn and remember. The activities do not build up children's knowledge and vocabulary well enough to prepare them for key stage 1.

Staff in the specialist speech and language unit are well trained. Pupil's behaviour in the setting is positive. Pupils are proud of their learning. In the wider school, pupils with SEND are included in all aspects of school life. They are happy, make progress and enjoy learning with their peers.

Pupils usually behave well in classrooms. They are inquisitive and ask lots of questions. Pupils' attention can wander when the learning planned doesn't engage them. Leaders have worked hard to put a behaviour policy in place that clearly maps out expectations and routines. Pupils know and follow these. Pupils show respect for adults and each other.

Too many pupils do not attend school regularly enough. Leaders are determined to improve pupils' attendance. They ensure that parents are clear about the consequences of absence, lateness and holidays in term time. However, pupils' attendance is still too low for a number of pupils.

Leaders ensure that pupils experience a wide range of activities to support their personal development. Some of these activities are sequenced across the curriculum. However, many activities happen by chance rather than being linked to a well sequenced programme of personal development.

Pupils talk with pride about leadership opportunities such as school councillors and eco warriors. Pupils learn about democracy by voting for these positions and even the youngest pupils vote for story time books. Pupils show tolerance for everyone in school. They talk about issues about race and diversity with respect.

Pupils learn about religions through themes like 'celebrations' so they can compare how different faiths approach major life events. Pupils are knowledgeable and respectful when speaking about other faiths and cultures.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders, including governors, are diligent in ensuring that pupils are safe. Staff receive regular training. They are clear about safeguarding procedures. Staff take swift and appropriate action in response to concerns. Any concerns are reported promptly and records are suitably detailed.

Governors receive regular updates on safeguarding. They check that systems are in place. The recruitment of new staff follows safer recruitment guidelines.

Pupils learn about risks to themselves whether online or in the local community. They know how to keep themselves safe and know who they can talk to if they are worried.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- Leaders have not ensured that staff have received effective training to enable them to understand and deliver the phonics scheme. This means that some pupils are not making the progress they should in reading. Leaders should ensure that all staff receive the relevant phonics training to improve the teaching of phonics.
- Leaders have not ensured that the curriculum, including in the early years, is well sequenced and the knowledge that pupils need to learn is mapped out. Therefore, pupils cannot remember key information to help them understand new learning. Leaders should ensure that the curriculum is well sequenced with clearly identified knowledge that pupils need to know and remember.
- Teachers are not using assessment well enough to quickly identify where pupils have gaps in their knowledge. As a result, some pupils are not making the progress they should. Leaders need to focus on improving teachers' use of assessment to improve teaching and quickly identify and address any gaps in pupils' learning.
- Too many pupils are regularly absent from school for long periods. This means that they are not learning as much as they should. Leaders should continue to work closely with families to ensure that they understand the importance of regular attendance.
- Leaders have not thought carefully about a planned range of experiences to develop pupils' talents and interests. Pupils' wider curriculum experiences are inconsistent and disjointed. Leaders should develop a programme of wider curricular activities that support pupils' personal development and help pupils explore a wide range of interests.

## **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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	124040
<b>Local authority</b>	Staffordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10227192
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	440
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	David Symons
<b>Headteacher</b>	Lee Smith
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.victoria.staffs.sch.uk">www.victoria.staffs.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	14 March 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school has a specialist 20 place speech and language unit.
- The school uses one unregistered alternative provision.
- The school is split over two sites.
- The school runs a breakfast provision.

## Information about this inspection

The inspector(s) 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 headteacher, the chair of governors and other senior leaders.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, history and music. For each deep dive inspectors met with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around school, including at lunchtime. Inspectors also met with groups of pupils to discuss their views of the school and personal development opportunities.
- Inspectors met with the designated safeguarding lead. They checked safeguarding documents, including the checks made on staff. They also examined documentation relating to pupils' attendance and behaviour.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View, and the views of pupils and staff in Ofsted's online surveys.
- Inspectors also spoke with pupils and staff informally during the school day.

### Inspection team

Corinne Biddell, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Eve Morris	Her Majesty's Inspector
Devinder Riat	Ofsted Inspector

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