

# Inspection of a good school: St John's CofE First School

Whiteoaks Drive, Bishopswood, Stafford, Staffordshire ST19 9AH

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Inspection date: 15 June 2022

## Outcome

St John's CofE First School continues to be a good school.

## What is it like to attend this school?

St John's Church of England First School is a friendly village school at the heart of the Bishopswood community. Leaders have high aspirations for all pupils. Pupils enjoy coming to school. They feel safe and live the school motto 'Learning together we will be learning for life'. Bullying is not tolerated. Pupils are confident that staff will resolve any bullying issues or other concerns they have.

Pupils achieve well personally and academically. Reading is well taught and as a result, pupils enjoy reading. Activities such as clubs, trips and residential visits allow pupils to gain wider experiences. Pupils deepen their knowledge of local history by visiting Boscobel House. Older pupils recently enjoyed a residential visit to the Kingswood Centre.

Leaders have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Regular training for staff ensures consistency and fairness in the school's approach. Pupils know the school rules. They are attentive during lessons and play well together at social times. Parents are positive about the quality of education their children receive. One parent's comment was typical of those who responded to Ofsted Parent View when they said, 'St John's is an amazing school where staff are exceptional. They go above and beyond for the children in all aspects of learning and well-being.'

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

Leaders have carefully designed an ambitious curriculum for pupils. In most subjects, the curriculum is well sequenced so that pupils know and remember more over time. Teachers receive the training they need to teach effectively. They have high expectations of what pupils should achieve, and pupils work hard to meet these expectations. Teachers check on pupils' learning during lessons, and they recap prior learning to help pupils remember things they have learned before. Teachers use their knowledge of what pupils know to carefully plan for the next steps in their learning. The development of the curriculum in a few subjects has been delayed because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Leaders are not as far ahead with this work as they had planned.

Leaders prioritise reading. The reading curriculum is carefully structured. Teachers are highly skilled and receive regular training. They have the knowledge and resources they need to teach phonics well. Reading books closely match the sounds pupils are learning. Pupils learn about the work of a variety of authors such as Martin Waddell, Juliet Donaldson and Michael Morpurgo. They read regularly in school and achieve well. Any pupil who struggles with their reading is given effective support to catch up quickly.

Leaders want children to do well from the moment they start school. Positive relationships between the school and parents help children in the early years settle well into school life. Children develop confidence through making choices in their learning. They enjoy joining in with stories. They learn about numbers through practical activities, songs and rhymes.

Staff provide effective support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and disadvantaged pupils. Pupils in need of additional support are swiftly identified and get the help they need so that they can learn well. Pupils who struggle or need harder work receive the right support. As a result, pupils with SEND and disadvantaged pupils achieve well in school.

Leaders provide a rich set of varied experiences to promote pupils' personal development. Pupils develop an age-appropriate understanding of positive and respectful healthy relationships. They enjoy fundraising for chosen charities. Opportunities such as 'eco-club' allow pupils to take on responsibilities in school. In doing so, they consider how to make the world a better place. Pupils develop their talents and interests through activities such as cricket club, reading club and singing in the 'Young Voices' event. The school rules 'be ready, be safe, be respectful' help pupils to understand right and wrong and how to keep themselves and others safe. Opportunities to learn about other cultures and religions help pupils to recognise and respect others' differences. This means that pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.

Senior leaders, governors and trust members know what the school does well, and they identify the right priorities for improvement. Together, they work well as a team and make regular checks on the work of the school. However, middle leaders have not been trained well enough to check the impact of the sequence and structure of the curriculum on pupils' achievement, particularly what pupils know and remember in the foundation subjects. Leaders have taken effective steps to reduce the burden of assessment on teachers' workload. Staff are positive about the support from leaders to manage their well-being and workload.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders are vigilant and ensure the welfare of pupils is prioritised. Staff receive regular safeguarding training. They record and report concerns such as domestic abuse and neglect swiftly. Leaders work in partnership with external agencies to secure help for those pupils who need it.

Pupils learn about online safety and healthy relationships. They know what bullying is and where it can take place. They know how to raise concerns with trusted adults in school.

Leaders ensure the necessary safeguarding checks are undertaken before staff are employed.

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

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

- Middle leaders have not received the right training to be able to monitor the impact of the curriculum. This means that leaders do not know how well the curriculum is making sure that pupils achieve more. Leaders should make sure that all middle leaders are trained well enough to be able to evaluate the impact of the curriculum.
- Leaders have recently revised the curriculum in information and communication technology (ICT) and modern foreign languages. These subjects are not as well developed as others and curriculum end points are not clear. Leaders should ensure that ICT and modern foreign languages are clearly planned and sequenced so that pupils know more and remember more, and that staff receive the training and resources they need to teach these subjects effectively.

## **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/outstanding. 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 predecessor school, St Johns CofE First School, to be good in February 2014.

## **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>	145380
<b>Local authority</b>	Staffordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10241463
<b>Type of school</b>	First
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 9
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	93
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Mark Roberts
<b>Headteacher</b>	Emma Challiner
<b>Website</b>	<a href="https://stjohnsbishopswood.org/">https://stjohnsbishopswood.org/</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- The school is part of Penk Valley Academy Trust.
- The school does not use alternative provision.
- The school was judged to be good at the most recent inspection of denominational education and the content of the school's collective worship under section 48 of the Education Act 2005, which took place in June 2018. Section 48 inspections were suspended due to the COVID-19 pandemic. They restarted in September 2021. The next inspection will be within eight years of the last section 48 inspection.

## 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 leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in reading, mathematics and physical education. These included visiting lessons, looking at pupils' work, examining curriculum guidance and talking with pupils and staff. They also looked at work from a sample of other subjects.

- Inspectors listened to pupils read and reviewed reading resources.
- The lead inspector looked at a range of documentation on the school's website.
- Inspectors reviewed the school's safeguarding arrangements. This included examining the record of employment checks on school staff.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and at other times during the day.
- During the inspection, inspectors had formal meetings with the headteacher, subject leaders, the special educational needs and disabilities coordinator, the designated safeguarding lead and trust representatives.
- Inspectors took account of responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View, the pupil survey and the staff survey.

### **Inspection team**

Lorraine Lord, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Susan Hughes

Ofsted Inspector

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