

Inspection of an outstanding school: Forsbrook Church of England Controlled Primary School

Cheadle Road, Blythe Bridge, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire ST11 9PW

Inspection dates:

11 and 12 October 2022

Outcome

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of outstanding as a result of this ungraded (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might not be as high if a graded (section 5) inspection were carried out now. The next inspection will therefore be a graded inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils, parents and carers, staff and leaders all feel proud to be part of the 'Forsbrook family'. The caring and nurturing culture created by staff enables positive relationships between the staff and pupils to grow and develop. School values such as compassion, respect, love and hope underpin everything that staff do.

Pupils enjoy coming to school and feel safe. They talk excitedly about their visits to the school library and the books that they read. Pupils say that bullying is rare, and adults support them to work out their differences when required. Pupils' behaviour across the school is calm. Pupils behave very well and show respect towards each other. They recognise that it is 'ok' to have different opinions and they respect the views of others.

Overall, pupils achieve well. Leaders' vision and high expectations for what they want pupils to learn have led to a change in the curriculum in some subjects. Subjects such as art and design, history and geography have been redesigned. Staff and pupils are excited about their new learning.

Pupils enjoy the responsibilities offered to them. Year 5 pupils take the role of recycling monitors seriously, while Year 6 pupils understand the responsibility that being a prefect brings. Pupils appreciate the range of residential trips that they attend in different year groups.

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

There have been significant changes to the curriculum at Forsbrook over the past year.

Leaders reviewed the curriculum in some subjects. As a result of this review, they have changed what they want pupils to learn. This new curriculum is ambitious for all pupils and sets out the key knowledge that they will learn and when they will learn it. It enables pupils to build successfully on their prior knowledge. However, in some subjects, leaders have not yet considered how pupils' learning in key stage 1 builds on what they have learned in early years. Where the curriculum is new, pupils do not remember as much of their learning as they do in other subjects.

Teachers present subject content clearly, breaking the learning down into small steps. They use a range of resources effectively to deepen pupils' understanding. For example, in mathematics, pupils use place value counters to help them understand the value of the different digits in numbers.

Leaders with responsibility for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) understand the needs of these pupils well. Early identification and precise targets allow teachers to provide effective support for pupils with SEND. This enables these pupils to access the same curriculum as their peers. As a result, pupils with SEND achieve well.

Leaders have recently refreshed the teaching of reading. Training has provided staff with the subject knowledge they need to teach phonics well. Teachers use the correct terminology with pupils when teaching phonics. For example, Year 1 pupils confidently recognise where two letters represent one sound in a word. For pupils who struggle to read, staff provide additional support. This helps these pupils to make progress in their reading. Pupils enjoy reading. They speak positively about the books they read and their visits to the school library. Pupils also enjoy reading books from the 'rotary trolley' and talk about the reasons why they choose the books they do.

Staff have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Pupils are polite and well mannered. They show positive attitudes towards their learning, so lessons are rarely disrupted. This starts in early years and continues in all other year groups. Pupils know the consequences of not following rules. Pupils have high expectations of each other. They expect people to be kind to each other and are accepting of difference. They understand what makes a healthy relationship.

Pupils appreciate the wide range of jobs and responsibilities in which they can take part. For example, pupils know that the jobs of house- and vice-captains to collect team points are very important and they carry out their roles responsibly. Pupils enjoy the trips offered by the school and say that these help them in their learning.

Governors support leaders in the changes that they have made to the curriculum. They understand the reasons for the changes and speak positively about the intended impact of these. However, their checks on leaders' actions are not always as thorough as they could be.

Staff are proud to work here. They say that despite the changes to the curriculum, leaders always consider their workload and well-being. Staff value leaders' actions to support them. In addition, parents value the work of leaders. They appreciate the support that they and their children receive.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders provide staff with training on a range of potential risks faced by pupils. As a result, staff are vigilant in spotting the signs that a pupil may be at risk. Leaders quickly respond to any concerns raised. They work closely with agencies to support pupils and families. Leaders understand the importance of recording safeguarding checks made on staff.

Pupils know how to keep themselves safe, including when online. They identify adults they trust with whom to share any concerns or worries. They feel safe at school. They recognise that parts of school life, such as fire alarms, all contribute to keeping them safe.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, leaders have not yet set out the key knowledge and skills that pupils should learn from early years. In some subjects, the curriculum is yet to be fully embedded. This means that pupils in some subjects find it harder to recall and build on what they have learned previously. Leaders should ensure that they continue to develop and embed the curriculum in all subjects so that it enables pupils to build successfully on their learning from early years.
- Governors' checks on leaders' actions are not always as thorough as they could be. This means that they are sometimes unsure whether leaders have completed tasks correctly, for example in respect of record-keeping. Governors must ensure that they implement more robust checking and monitoring systems, so that they adhere closely to their statutory responsibilities.

Background

When we have judged a school to be outstanding, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains outstanding. This is called an ungraded inspection and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be outstanding in May 2016.

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.

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	132260
Local authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	10240522
Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	5 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	238
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Christine Bratt
Headteacher	Kate Cooke
Website	www.forsbrookprimaryschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	17 May 2016, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Forsbrook Church of England Controlled Primary School is an average-sized primary school.
- It is part of the Diocese of Lichfield.
- The school received its most recent section 48 inspection of schools of a religious character on 30 June 2016. 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 previous section 48 inspection.
- Leaders do not make use of alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

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

- The inspector met with representatives from the governing body, the headteacher and other senior leaders from the school. They also spoke with a representative from the diocese and the local authority.
- Deep dives were conducted in reading, mathematics and art. The inspector spoke with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. They also spoke with subject leaders for computing and physical education.
- The inspector took account of the comments and responses to Ofsted Parent View. Comments in the pupil and staff surveys were also considered.
- The inspector spoke with leaders and staff about the effectiveness of safeguarding. This included meeting with the designated safeguarding lead to discuss record-keeping, and talking to staff about training and how to record concerns. The inspector spoke with pupils about how they are taught to stay safe. Inspectors reviewed behaviour and attendance records.

Inspection team

Michelle Bishton, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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