

Inspection of St Christopher's CEVCP School

St Christopher's Cevcp School, Bellflower Crescent, Red Lodge, Bellflower Crescent,
Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk IP28 8XQ

Inspection dates: 2 and 3 November 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 Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils learn well and enjoy their lessons. They approach their learning with mature and positive attitudes. Pupils talk with enthusiasm about the things they learn, and the activities that staff provide for them. They particularly enjoy the school's 'wild' activities and future work-related role play.

Most pupils behave well in lessons and during playtimes and lunchtimes. They are polite and considerate of each other. Bullying is very rare and, if it does happen, staff resolve it quickly. Some pupils are trained to be anti-bullying ambassadors. They help others to feel safe and happy at school.

Pupils enjoy and take a keen interest in learning about the different views, values and beliefs that exist in the world. They talk enthusiastically about the school values of 'positivity, respect, independence, determination and equity'. Older pupils relish the many opportunities available to take on positions of responsibility. In these roles, they actively promote the values of the school by leading assemblies and collective worship.

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

Leaders have designed and developed a well-organised curriculum for pupils, including children in early years. In most subjects, they have carefully selected what pupils need to know and remember. In art and design, for example, pupils are confident at applying previously taught skills and knowledge in activities such as 'art in the Italian renaissance' and 'style in art'. Teachers use assessment appropriately to check on what pupils know and can do. They adapt the curriculum where it is evident that pupils have gaps in their previous knowledge and understanding.

In a small number of subjects, however, pupils do not have a secure understanding of what they need to know to allow them to fully access the next stage of learning. This is because, in these subjects, pupils do not apply or practise what they have learned sufficiently to secure their understanding of leaders' intended curriculum before moving on.

Since the previous inspection, leaders have acted to improve the teaching of reading. Staff are well trained in the school's chosen phonics programme. They help pupils to learn new sounds and words effectively. Staff make sure that the reading books that pupils use are closely matched to the sounds they are learning. Pupils who need more support, including those in early years, benefit from timely help that ensures they do not fall behind. The teaching of reading helps pupils to learn to read accurately, fluently and with understanding. As pupils get older, they develop an understanding of literature through carefully selected class texts. Pupils say they enjoy reading for pleasure at home.

Leaders have clear systems to identify pupils who need additional support. This includes those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Well-trained staff provide targeted support for these pupils. Leaders carefully monitor and review the impact of this support. Pupils with SEND participate in a full curriculum.

Pupils are enthusiastic about the many opportunities provided to develop their interests and talents, including a recent visit to the science museum in London and participation in an 'eco-council', a 'young buds' garden club and sports teams.

Leaders have developed a curriculum which ensures pupils understand the importance of vital values such as tolerance, respect, equality and democracy. Older pupils play a key role in promoting the ethos of the school, presenting pupils with 'values hands' in whole-school collective worship. The process for electing class representatives teaches pupils about democracy.

Leaders ensure that staff workload is manageable. Staff who spoke to inspectors said that they feel well supported and are proud to work at the school. Trustees and governors know the school well. They provide effective support and challenge to school leaders.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders create a robust culture of safeguarding. They ensure that the required pre-employment checks are thorough and recorded accurately. All staff receive regular training to ensure they know how to identify and raise safeguarding concerns. Leaders act swiftly and appropriately on concerns to keep pupils safe. They work effectively with outside agencies when required.

Pupils know how to keep themselves safe. Leaders ensure that the curriculum provides them with a secure understanding of safety in a range of circumstances, including online and the importance of healthy relationships.

Governors and trustees regularly monitor safeguarding procedures and hold leaders to account for ensuring that these are rigorously applied. They are reflective and constantly review where they could improve their practice.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a small number of subjects, pupils are unable build on what they already know well enough to allow them to fully access the next stage of learning. This is because, in these subjects, pupils are not given sufficient opportunity to apply or

practise what they have learned to secure their understanding of leaders' intended curriculum. Leaders need to develop the curriculum further so that in all subjects, pupils fully understand what they have been taught before they move on.

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	142025
Local authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	10241614
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	340
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Mike Younger
Headteacher	Caroline James
Website	www.stcprimary.suffolk.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	17 and 18 September 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Diocese of Ely Multi-Academy Trust, which consists of 39 schools.
- The most recent SIAMs inspection took place in November 2016. This is an inspection of the school's religious character.
- The school converted to become an academy in November 2016.
- There are no pupils attending alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector(s) carried out this graded 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 met with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, special educational needs coordinator, chair of governors and the trust's chief executive officer.
- The lead inspector held a discussion with representatives of the trust responsible for improvement work with the school.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in reading, mathematics, art, science and history. For each deep dive, inspectors reviewed curriculum plans 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 discussed the arrangements to safeguard pupils with school leaders, including governors and the trust's chief executive officer. Inspectors spoke with staff about the training they receive to keep their knowledge of safeguarding up to date. Inspectors spoke with pupils to establish the extent to which they feel safe in school and how pupils learn to keep themselves safe, including when online. Inspectors scrutinised documentation and records of safeguarding concerns and how these are followed up. Inspectors scrutinised the single central record of pre-employment checks.
- Inspectors considered the feedback from 33 parents to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, including 31 free-text comments. Inspectors spoke with staff and with pupils to gather their views of the school.

Inspection team

Michael Thomas, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Richard Fordham	Ofsted Inspector
Joanna Pedlow	Ofsted Inspector

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