

Inspection of Castlemorton Church of England Primary School

Church Road, Castlemorton, Malvern, Worcestershire WR13 6BG

Inspection dates: 8 and 9 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 Not previously inspected

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy and thrive at this small community school. Staff establish warm and nurturing relationships with children from the outset. Children settle quickly and feel safe and secure. Leaders and staff know pupils very well and are attentive to their needs.

Adults want the best for every child. Adults expect pupils to work hard and behave well, and they do. Bullying is rare. If it happens, pupils know that they should report it and staff will act quickly to sort it out. The school's 'peacemakers' play an active part at playtimes in helping to resolve any squabbles or disputes that may arise.

The school's values, known as the 'Four Cs': confidence, cooperation, commitment and care, permeate the ethos of the school. Pupils have a firm understanding of these values and demonstrate them in their attitudes to learning and behaviour. They grow in maturity and confidence by taking an active role in school life. For example, older pupils plan and lead weekly worship.

Parents and carers have positive views of the school. They appreciate and value the care and attention all staff show to pupils. A parent said: 'All staff at the school are caring and committed and their enthusiasm is a joy to behold.'

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

There have been significant changes recently to staffing, leadership and governance. However, these changes have been handled well by the trust and governing body. The school is well led and managed and continues to run smoothly.

Leaders have designed an exciting and ambitious curriculum. They have carefully mapped out the skills, knowledge and key vocabulary they want pupils to learn in all subjects. Content is sequenced well to help pupils build and retain their learning over time. Staff manage the mixed age groups extremely well. Work in pupils' book shows that pupils achieve well for their age and ability.

The early years curriculum is well thought out. Children get off to a strong start. Most can already write their names and know and use numbers to 10. Adults model language well to ensure that children's communication and language are secure. Staff plan imaginative activities which cover all areas of learning. However, curriculum leaders have not checked that the early years curriculum feeds successfully into the key stage 1 curriculum.

Teachers have good subject knowledge, and they use resources effectively to support learning. Regular formal assessments in English and mathematics determine how well pupils are achieving and highlight any gaps in learning. Leaders use this information well to provide extra support. Teachers also check pupils' work in other subjects. However, the school's approach to assessing how much pupils know and

remember is at an early stage of development. This reduces leaders' knowledge of achievement across the whole curriculum.

Reading is a high priority in the school. Daily reading is a non-negotiable and staff hear pupils read regularly. Quirky initiatives, such as 'funky readers', help encourage a love of reading. Books are good quality and matched to pupils' abilities. Younger pupils have daily phonics lessons. They are taught in small groups so that they get focused attention. Consequently, pupils make a strong start in early reading. Almost all go on to be competent, fluent readers. Those who do struggle are provided with additional support to help them improve their confidence and ability.

This is an inclusive school. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are fully included in all aspects of school life. Teachers make adaptations to the curriculum and provide equipment and support so that pupils can access all lessons. Leaders ensure that specialist input is provided for pupils with specific needs, such as speech and language difficulties.

Pupils display positive attitudes to learning. They enjoy finding out about new things and take a keen interest in lessons. Because they behave well, lessons are not disrupted, and pupils can concentrate fully.

Leaders provide a wide range of opportunities and rich experiences to develop pupils' talents and interests. Clubs, visits and visitors add to pupils' enjoyment of school. Many participate in sports tournaments and music festivals and all pupils learn to play a musical instrument. Leaders ensure that disadvantaged pupils are fully included in enrichment activities and do not miss out due to their personal circumstances.

Pupils have an early knowledge of British values. They know the importance of voting and respect for others. They learn about different cultures and religions and there is evidence that pupils learn about diversity in different areas of the curriculum. However, pupils' understanding of and exposure to diverse communities are limited.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and all staff are committed to keeping pupils safe. They receive up-to-date training and are vigilant. All appropriate checks are completed to ensure the suitability of staff. Staff know how to report and record any concerns that arise. Leaders act on the reports received. They share information with the right people to protect pupils who may be at risk of harm.

Pupil safety is woven into the curriculum. Pupils feel safe and understand how to keep themselves safe. They are confident that they can speak to a trusted adult if they are worried about anything.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have not ensured that there is progression and continuity between the early years and key stage 1 curriculum. This means that pupils may not have some of the basic knowledge, skills or vocabulary they need in Year 1, or that the key stage 1 curriculum is sufficiently ambitious. Subject leaders should ensure that there is clear progression from the early years to key stage 1 so that pupils achieve as well as they should in all subjects.
- The school's approach to assessing what pupils know and remember in the foundation subjects is at an early stage of development. This means that staff do not know how much progress pupils make in different subjects. Leaders should continue to review their approach to checking how well pupils are achieving across the whole curriculum.
- Pupils' understanding of fundamental British values and cultural diversity is not secure. As a result, pupils' preparedness for life in modern Britain is restricted. Leaders should ensure that pupils have more opportunities to experience other cultures and people with different religious beliefs to gain a better understanding of communities beyond their own immediate environment.

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 Ofsted Parent View information 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	145837
Local authority	Worcestershire
Inspection number	10241478
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	83
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Hugh Richards
Head of school	Amanda Smithson
Website	www.castlemortonprimaryschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school joined the Diocese of Worcester Multi Academy Trust in July 2018.
- The head of school was appointed in September 2022. She is supported by an executive headteacher for one-and-a-half days per week.
- The chair of governors was appointed in September 2022.
- Three out of five teaching staff are recent appointments.
- A pre-school group, Caterpillars, operates on the school site. This is not currently managed by the governing body, but pre-school children work alongside the Reception children in the classroom and share resources. Plans are currently in place to extend the school's age range to cater for 3- to 11-year-olds, to incorporate pre-school provision within the school.
- Children in the birth to 2-year-old range, Ducklings, also use the school's facilities and resources.
- The school's last section 48 inspection was in March 2020. 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.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors 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 school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation.
- The inspectors met with the executive headteacher and head of school. Meetings were also held with four members of the local academy board, including the chair of governors, and two representatives from the trust, including the chief education officer.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in reading, English, mathematics and physical education. Inspection activities in these subjects included: lesson visits, discussion with staff and pupils, meeting with subject leaders to discuss the curriculum, and work scrutiny. The lead inspector also observed pupils reading.
- The inspectors considered a range of documents, including the school's self-evaluation and plans for improvement. Minutes of governor meetings were scrutinised. Inspectors also looked at records of behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.
- The inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around school and talked to them informally about behaviour, bullying and welfare.
- The inspectors visited the breakfast club to check provision for pupils who attend.
- The inspectors talked to parents at the end of the school day and considered the responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View, and their free-text responses. They also reviewed the responses to the staff questionnaire and gathered the views of staff and pupils on site through discussion with these groups.

Inspection team

Heather Simpson, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Vicki Shuter

Ofsted Inspector

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