

Inspection of Churchend Primary Academy

Usk Road, Tilehurst, Reading, Berkshire RG30 4HP

Inspection dates: 6 and 7 December 2022

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Requires improvement
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Ofsted has not previously inspected Churchend Primary Academy as an academy school under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 as, until November 2020, the school was exempted by law from routine inspection, so there has been a longer gap than usual between inspections.

Judgements in this report are based on the current inspection framework and also reflect changes that may have happened at any point since the last inspection of the predecessor school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Leaders have high expectations of what pupils can achieve and how pupils should behave. The school mission, 'be the best version of yourself' permeates through all aspects of school life. Churchend is full of smiling pupils who try their best, aim high and behave well.

Leaders have created an inclusive school where everyone is welcome. Pupils show great respect to each other and value difference. A recent Diwali celebration day saw parents teaching the school community about their traditions. Pupils love to learn about the many different faiths and cultures at their school and beyond.

Behaviour in lessons is calm. Adults deal with any low-level disruption swiftly. Some pupils have significant social and emotional mental health needs. These pupils access high-quality support through a nurture provision. Pastoral support is strong. Staff support pupils well to understand and regulate their emotions.

Bullying is rare and leaders deal with it immediately if it occurs. The school council takes a lead in making sure pupils understand what bullying is. This is very successful. Pupils know about the different types of bullying and to tell adults if they see bullying happening. Correctly, pupils and parents have faith in leaders to sort any issues out.

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

Leaders are rightly firm in their belief that 'reading is the key to the curriculum'. They prioritise the teaching of reading. Pupils confidently talk about the books and authors they enjoy. The teaching of phonics is secure. Staff regularly check any gaps in pupils' knowledge. Well-trained staff provide effective support for those pupils who need extra help in learning to read.

Under the leadership of the new headteacher, the school is flourishing. Staff and parents are positive about the changes leaders are making. Trustees know the school well. They use their knowledge and expertise to provide leaders with effective challenge and support. Staff say that leaders are considerate of their workload. Staff are proud to work at the school.

Leaders have developed a broad and ambitious curriculum for all pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The curriculum is well sequenced in all subjects, from Nursery to Year 6. Pupils' new learning builds on prior knowledge. For example, in art, Year 6 pupils use what they have previously learned about water colour to experiment with different intensity of colour, depicting mood. Pupils can express their preferences of artwork and give thoughtful evaluations of theirs and others' work. Leaders identify pupils with SEND accurately. Teachers provide strong support so that these pupils can access the same learning as their class mates. Consequently, pupils with SEND learn very well.

The foundation subject curriculum, however, is fairly new. Leaders are currently making sure that staff are well trained so that they teach this curriculum consistently well. On the whole, teachers deliver lessons clearly, using agreed approaches such as presenting new knowledge in small steps. Occasionally, staff lack the subject knowledge and confidence to address misconceptions and reshape learning. Teachers do not always design activities that best check what pupils know and remember.

Some subject leaders have a strong understanding of their area of responsibility. They lead professional development well to support their colleagues. Other subject leaders are new to role. This means that, sometimes, they do not have the skills to best support teachers to improve their subject knowledge and check how well pupils are learning their subject.

Children in early years settle quickly. Adults and children develop strong relationships. However, children in the early years do not achieve as well as they could. Leaders have carefully considered what children need to learn, remember and experience in early years. Yet, activities provided do not tie closely enough to what it is children must learn. They do not always sustain children's interests. Children do not have enough opportunities to practise and deepen their learning. Leaders are working with external consultants to improve this.

Leaders promote pupils' personal development well. For example, pupils learn how to keep healthy, both physically and mentally. By Year 3, pupils understand not only the importance of a healthy diet, water and sleep, but also the need for regular fresh air to keep well. Older pupils learn how to resist pressure and the impact of unhealthy choices.

Leaders have revamped procedures for overseeing attendance recently. Staff identify and address problems quickly. They support and challenge families well so attendance is an improving picture. However, there still remains too many pupils absent too often from school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

All staff receive thorough safeguarding training which helps them spot any signs of abuse. This includes weekly focused questions on different types of safeguarding risks. Staff report any worries quickly. Leaders take swift actions to keep pupils safe. Very occasionally, leaders' record keeping is not as thorough as it could be. This does not place pupils at risk of harm.

Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe, including online, and how to respond to peer pressure. Pupils feel confident to speak to adults or use the worry boxes if they have any concerns.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some foundation subjects, and in the early years, the curriculum is new. Some teachers do not have sufficient subject knowledge to consistently teach these subjects well. Senior leaders should ensure that all subject leaders have the skills to best support their colleagues so that the curriculum is consistently well delivered, including in the early years.
- Leaders have not fully embedded procedures for checking what pupils know and remember across foundation subjects. This means that teachers do not always recognise when pupils have gaps in their knowledge. Leaders should continue to make sure that teachers know how to check what pupils know and remember, so they can best plan subsequent learning.
- Despite leaders' actions, some pupils are too often absent from school. As a result, these pupils are missing out on their learning and their progress is hindered. Leaders should continue to work with these pupils and their families to improve attendance.

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	136457
Local authority	Reading
Inspection number	10228870
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	444
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Dawn Smith
Headteacher	Howard Seymour
Website	www.churchendacademy.com
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Churchend Primary Academy converted to become an academy in February 2012. When its predecessor school, Churchend Primary, was last inspected by Ofsted in September 2008, it was judged to be outstanding.
- At the time of the last inspection, the school was a one-form entry primary school. It has grown since then and is now a two-form entry primary school.
- The headteacher took up his post in September 2021.
- The school does not currently 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 leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with senior leaders, staff, pupils and parents.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, history, religious education and art. Inspectors spoke to subject leaders, staff and pupils, visited lessons and looked at pupils' work. An inspector heard pupils read to an adult from the school. Inspectors also spoke to leaders and looked at samples of pupils' work in some other subjects.
- The lead inspector met with four trustees including the chair.
- Inspectors reviewed the school's safeguarding arrangements. This included safer recruitment checks and the schools' records of concerns. Inspectors also spoke to staff, trustees and pupils about safeguarding.
- The lead inspector reviewed a range of documentation, including leaders' self-evaluation of the school and school development plan.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour throughout the day. They spoke to pupils about their views on behaviour in school. Inspectors considered how the school is supporting pupils' personal development.
- They took into account parents' responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View and parents' free-text comments. An inspector spoke with a number of parents at the beginning of the school day. They also considered the 39 responses to Ofsted's online survey for staff and the 65 responses from pupils to Ofsted's survey.
- A group of 33 pupils from Year 4 and Year 5 were away from school on a residential trip for both days of this inspection.

Inspection team

Lea Hannam, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Michael Eggleton	Ofsted Inspector
Simon Francis	Ofsted Inspector

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