

Inspection of a good school: Withington Church of England Primary School

High Street, Withington, Cheltenham, Gloucestershire GL54 4BQ

Inspection date:

14 December 2022

Outcome

Withington Church of England Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy and well behaved. Older pupils enjoy their role as young leaders. They show younger pupils how to play games successfully. The youngest children quickly learn to share and take turns. Pupils play and learn together well.

Staff and pupils have positive working relationships built on trust and respect. Pupils say they feel safe in school. Bullying is extremely rare. Pupils have a strong sense of fairness. They learn about cultures and religions different from their own. Pupils believe everyone should be kind to each other.

Pupils read a wide variety of books that help them to become passionate and knowledgeable readers. For example, pupils use the information they have read to debate issues such as global warming. They learn to understand people's different points of view.

Parents say staff are compassionate and encouraging of their children. Pupils know how to be physically and mentally healthy. They value after-school clubs such as sports, art and science. Pupils in key stage 2 enjoy the residential visit where they try new and exciting activities. They like to represent their school in sporting events. The school's enrichment opportunities develop pupils' resilience and self-confidence effectively.

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

Leaders, including governors, know the school's strengths and areas for development thoroughly. There are systems in place to check the effectiveness of leaders' actions accurately. Leaders show careful consideration of staff workload and well-being. Staff appreciate leaders' care and support.

Leaders prioritise pupils learning to read well. There is an ambitious reading curriculum in place. Staff introduce children to the joy of books in the early years. The youngest pupils read books that closely match the phonics they learn. Staff's subject knowledge is secure.

They use this to check pupils' phonic knowledge regularly. Pupils who need help to read well have appropriate extra practice.

Pupils frequently listen to stories read by their teachers. Together, they talk about high-quality texts. This improves pupils' knowledge of different text types and vocabulary. Visits by authors and the well-stocked libraries inspire pupils as readers and writers.

Leaders have developed a well-sequenced curriculum from the early years to Year 6. The curriculum identifies the essential knowledge pupils must know and remember. Teachers use the curriculum to plan appropriate learning activities successfully. Pupils secure new knowledge effectively. This includes pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

Teachers regularly check what pupils know and remember. Teachers do not introduce new concepts until pupils have secure subject knowledge. For example, in mathematics, pupils who struggle to learn a concept attend additional sessions. This ensures pupils keep up with leaders' curriculum expectations.

Nevertheless, assessment is undeveloped in some wider curriculum subjects. Teachers do not check that essential knowledge is remembered. This means that in some subjects pupils have gaps in their knowledge so do not build new skills, vocabulary and understanding securely.

Each year, leaders carefully plan pupils' personal development. This includes pupils' understanding of British Values. For example, they learn about the rule of law. Pupils write classroom and playground rules. Right from the start, staff encourage and help children to be independent. Staff show the youngest children how to toilet and dress themselves successfully. Staff use praise to develop pupils' self-esteem and help them make the right choices now and in the future. Pupils in Year 6, for example, know the impact addiction can have on someone's life. They are confident to stand up for themselves and each other. Pupils' personal development is supported well.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Appropriate safeguarding checks are completed before staff begin working at the school. Leaders, including governors, regularly check recruitment records to assure themselves they are accurate.

Staff and governors attend safeguarding training regularly. This helps them to carry out their safeguarding roles and responsibilities. Staff know how to report and record concerns for pupils' safety and welfare. Leaders follow up on concerns swiftly. Leaders work with appropriate external agencies when necessary.

Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe. This includes online safety.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, leaders have not set out how they want pupils' learning to be assessed. This means assessment information is collected and used in different ways. This does not help teachers adapt the learning to meet pupils' needs sufficiently. Leaders need to agree on assessment methods across these subjects and support teachers to use the information to ensure pupils know and remember more.

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. 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 second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in April 2012.

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	115703
Local authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	10227058
Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	36
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Peter Webb, OBE
Headteacher	Sonia Beames
Website	www.withington.gloucs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	21 February 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Withington Church of England Primary School is a Gloucestershire Local Authority maintained school.
- The school has three classes, including nursery provision for two- to four-year-olds.
- The school received its School Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools, section 48 inspection, in June 2017. This aspect of the school's work was graded good.
- It does not use any alternative providers.

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.
- The inspectors met with the headteacher, staff, pupils and governors, including the chair of the governing body. The lead inspector had a telephone call with a local authority representative. A representative from the Diocese of Gloucester attended the final feedback meeting.

- The lead inspector listened to pupils from Years 1, 2 and 3 read to a known adult.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics and art and design. For each deep dive, the inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspectors also observed pupils during breaktimes, looked at pupils' work and spoke with pupils and leaders about personal, social and health education and opportunities for pupils' personal development.
- The inspectors reviewed the school's safeguarding documentation, including records of safeguarding checks carried out on staff working at the school. They considered how well the designated safeguarding lead acts on concerns about pupils' safety and welfare. The inspectors spoke to pupils, staff and governors about safeguarding practices.
- The lead inspector considered the responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View. She also took into consideration the responses to the surveys for staff and pupils.

Inspection team

Marie Thomas, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Paula Marsh

Ofsted Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2022