

Inspection of Ruskington Chestnut Street Church of England Academy

Chestnut Street, Ruskington, Sleaford, Lincolnshire NG34 9DL

Inspection dates: 17 and 18 January 2023

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 Good

What is it like to attend this school?

The school values of 'care, believe and grow' shine through at this friendly and inclusive school. Pupils know and understand these values. Together with the staff, they live and breathe them each day.

Pupils say that they are happy and safe here. They have many adults to help them should they have a worry or a problem. One pupil summed up this care and support by saying, 'I call my teacher my school mum.' Staff expect all pupils to work hard and behave well. They do. Pupils have pride in their work. They are enthusiastic in lessons and keen to please. Pupils say that bullying is extremely rare. Staff deal with any cases swiftly and fairly.

Pupils are encouraged to eat healthily and to keep fit through the daily mile. There are different clubs on offer to develop pupils' talents and interests. Pupils benefit from a variety of trips out and visitors to the school. They are getting a good deal here.

The vast majority of parents and carers hold positive views of the school. One typical comment being, 'This school is an amazing place for my child to learn, grow and make friendships. They spring out of bed each morning!'

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

Leaders have ensured that the curriculum is well designed and sequenced. Teachers are clear about the subject content and vocabulary they should teach and when they should teach it. Leaders have thought carefully about the order in which this subject content is taught. For example, pupils in Year 3 learn about Southern Italy in geography. This sets them up for further work when learning about Mount Etna and The Romans in Year 4.

Teachers assess pupils' learning in some subjects. For example, in mathematics there are daily 'Flashback 4s'. These also help pupils to remember and practise what they have previously learned. However, teachers are not always clear what pupils have learned and remembered in all subjects.

Leaders have prioritised the teaching of early reading. There is now a consistent approach that starts in the early years. Staff have received effective training. They ensure that pupils have reading books that match the sounds that they are learning. Frequent assessments mean that any pupil who might be falling behind is spotted quickly. Such pupils receive extra sessions to help them to catch up. Many pupils enjoy reading to 'Bear', the therapy dog. Pupils say that there is a good selection of books to choose from in the recently re-vamped library.

The curriculum for pupils' personal development is a strength. There are strong links with the local community. These include the care home, church, library and food

bank. Such links are encouraging the pupils to be responsible and respectful citizens. Pupils have an age-appropriate understanding of relationships. A learning mentor is available to help pupils with their social and emotional development. Pupils are taught mindfulness and relaxation techniques alongside 'cosmic yoga'. They are being well prepared for life in modern Britain.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are included in all aspects of school life. This includes those children with SEND in the early years. Staff have received specialist training. This helps to ensure that pupils with specific needs do not miss out. Pupils can take part in 'sensory circuits'. These are small, physical challenges that help them to regulate their behaviour. There are sensible systems in place to identify and then support pupils with SEND. Pupils' support plans are detailed. The plans set out realistic targets. There are links with outside agencies such as the behaviour and autism teams and an educational psychologist. Leaders also signpost parents to other agencies and charities who can offer specialist help and guidance.

Children in both the Little Conkers nursery and the Reception class get off to a cracking start. They are provided with a stimulating and well-thought-through curriculum. Activities have a clear purpose. Resources in classrooms and in the outside areas are appropriate. Staff are knowledgeable. They are adept at improving pupils' communication and language skills through careful questioning. Relationships between adults and children are warm and positive.

Leaders have the trust of parents, pupils and staff alike. Staff say they are proud to work here and that leaders are sensitive to their well-being and workload. They value the training opportunities provided by the trust. The academy committee are relatively new. They have started to meet their responsibilities. However, they have yet to make a start on and review several of their other responsibilities.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and staff have received effective safeguarding training. They know the signs of potential pupil neglect and harm to look out for. Safeguarding records are detailed. Leaders are prompt at contacting outside agencies should the need arise. Pupils can receive extra welfare checks through 'The Nest'. This enables pupils to talk with staff at different times of the day should they have a problem or worry. Pupils are taught to stay safe when they are online, riding bikes, crossing roads or close to the nearby railway line.

Leaders have received appropriate safer-recruitment training.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, teachers do not routinely check which aspects of the curriculum pupils have learned. Consequently, they do not always know how well pupils are progressing through the curriculum. Leaders should ensure that teachers are able to check what pupils have remembered to help them to assess how well pupils are progressing. These checks should not be time consuming or over-burdensome.
- The relatively new academy committee have begun to meet some of their areas of responsibility. However, certain important aspects remain unmet. For example, around pupils' personal development, behaviour and attendance and the extra-curricular provision. The academy committee should ensure that they fulfil all their responsibilities as outlined in the scheme of delegation.

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	138324
Local authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	10254815
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	188
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Jerry Woolner
Headteacher	George Trafford (Executive headteacher)
Website	http://www.chestnutstreet.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	17 October 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The executive headteacher and head of school took up their roles in September 2019 and September 2020 respectively.
- The school is a Church of England primary school. It underwent a section 48 Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) in March 2016. SIAMS inspections were suspended as part of COVID-19 restrictions.
- The school offers a breakfast and an after-school club.
- The school uses the services of a registered alternative provider.

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 held various meetings with the executive headteacher, head of school and other staff. The lead inspector met with three members of the academy committee, including the vice-chair and representatives from the trust.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics science and geography. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors looked at curriculum plans and spoke with leaders about some other subjects. The lead inspector listened to pupils from Year 1 and Year 2 read.
- Inspectors met with pupils to understand their views of the school.
- To inspect safeguarding, the lead inspector checked the single central record. Inspectors checked staff's knowledge of the school's safeguarding procedures. Safeguarding records were scrutinised.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's parent and staff questionnaires.

Inspection team

Peter Stonier, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Sarah Allison

Ofsted Inspector

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