

Inspection of Holy Trinity Church of England Primary School

Jersey Street, Cheltenham, Gloucestershire GL52 2JP

Inspection dates: 24 and 25 January 2023

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Early years provision

Good

Previous inspection grade

Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils and parents speak positively about improved expectations for pupils' behaviour since the arrival of the new headteacher. Reward systems ensure that pupils who behave well get noticed and are given praise. Pupils feel happy and safe. Parents share this view. When problems occur, staff address them quickly. The new pastoral team supports those pupils needing to improve their behaviour well. Incidents of unkind behaviour have reduced dramatically. Pupils say that bullying does not happen.

Pupils learn well in some subjects such as English, mathematics and science. However, the curriculum plans for many subjects have been newly implemented or have not yet started. This restricts the breadth of the curriculum.

The school is inclusive. Parents speak positively of the support the school gives their children. Families of new pupils feel particularly welcome. Pupils trust staff and know that there is always an adult that they can turn to if they need to talk.

Pupils know the school's values. These reflect the Christian ethos and the wider values of British society. Pupils are currently reflecting on the value 'compassion' and understand its importance. Leaders ensure there is a wide range of extra-curricular activities to support pupils in developing their talents and interests, including a school orchestra.

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

The school has had four headteachers during the past 14 months. Recent leaders have identified the key areas that need to be improved. They have prioritised improving the behaviour of pupils and safeguarding. For example, they have created a pastoral support team to help with social and emotional needs. This has improved behaviour and significantly reduced the number of suspensions.

Leaders have designed an effective curriculum for English, mathematics and science. They have carefully broken down the important content into small steps of learning in these subjects. Teachers know precisely what is to be taught and when. They present subject matter clearly. Teachers revisit important content, which helps pupils remember this over time.

Reading is at the heart of the school's curriculum. The focus on class reading books promotes a love of reading. The curriculum begins in the Reception Year. The order in which pupils and children learn sounds has been carefully set out. Leaders check what pupils learning before they move on. Most pupils master the sounds that they need to decode words. However, some pupils who need extra help do not practise their reading sufficiently to develop their fluency. Teachers have not identified this through their checking. Consequently, teaching is not precise enough to help these pupils catch up quickly.

Children in the early years get off to a strong start. The Reception class is a calm and purposeful place to learn. Well-established routines help children to feel secure and to behave well. The teaching they receive builds knowledge that prepares them well for key stage 1. Learning activities provide a wide range of engaging experiences. For example, the woods are used to develop children's understanding of the stories they have read through role play and art.

For many subjects, the redesign of the curriculum is at an early stage. Pupils do not experience a curriculum that is sufficiently broad and balanced. They do not build their knowledge well over time. Leaders do not understand what pupils know and can do. As a result, learning is not adapted to meet pupils' needs.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) access the same curriculum as others. In some parts of English and mathematics, learning is adapted to ensure that these pupils learn well. However, some pupils with SEND do not develop strong fluency in reading because teaching is not precise enough for their needs.

Pupils' personal development is carefully planned. The school provides high-quality pastoral support. Pupils understand what a healthy relationship is. They know how to keep themselves physically healthy. Pupils understand democracy through electing the school council. They have meaningful opportunities to develop their leadership skills through the school council, for example planning the school library.

Staff workload has increased as they address a legacy of issues. However, staff see the benefits that the changes are bringing to pupils and feel valued by leaders for their work.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Positive relationships are at the heart of the school's safeguarding culture. Leaders set out practices that build trust so that pupils are confident and willing to talk about worries or concerns.

Pupils feel safe, and bullying behaviour is addressed effectively. They know about healthy relationships and how to keep themselves safe online.

Leaders ensure that staff are knowledgeable about safeguarding issues. They have appropriate systems in place to ensure that issues are recorded and reported in a timely manner. Leaders know when to escalate concerns and work closely with appropriate external agencies to keep pupils safe. Leaders ensure appropriate checks are made when recruiting staff.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The teaching and assessment of some pupils' early reading, including those with SEND, is not accurate enough. This slows pupils' ability to learn to read fluently. Leaders need to ensure that assessment is effective to enable them to understand pupils' phonic knowledge and to adapt learning as appropriate.
- In some subjects, the curriculum is not ambitious or sequenced well. As a result, pupils do not build their knowledge over time. Leaders need to ensure that curriculum design is ambitious and sets out clearly what pupils need to know and when.
- Assessment is not effective in identifying what pupils know and can do in the foundation subjects. As a result, leaders and teachers are unable to adapt learning to meet pupils' needs. Leaders need to put in place effective assessment systems to understand pupils' knowledge and to determine future learning.

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	115666
Local authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	10241780
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	204
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Helen Morris
Headteacher	Kurt Doyle
Website	http://www.holytrinity.gloucs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	30 March 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Holy Trinity Church of England Primary School is a voluntary controlled school in the Diocese of Gloucester.
- The school has undergone significant changes in staffing since the last inspection.
- The school runs a breakfast club and after-school provision on site.
- The school does not use any alternative providers.

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. The inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspectors met with the headteacher, school leaders, other school staff, members of the governing body, a representative from the local authority, and educational representatives from the diocese.

- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and history.
- For each deep dive, the inspectors discussed the curriculum 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.
- For the early reading deep dive, the lead inspector listened to pupils read to a familiar adult and visited early reading lessons delivered by teachers, and teaching assistants.
- Inspectors also reviewed curriculum planning and pupils' work across other subjects in the curriculum.
- The inspectors talked to pupils, staff and leaders about how the school supports the safety of pupils.
- The inspectors observed pupils' behaviour when arriving at school, in lessons and during breaktimes. The inspectors met senior leaders to discuss the school's approach to behaviour management and how staff respond to behaviour incidents.
- The inspectors reviewed and sampled leaders' checks on the suitability of staff to work with children. They discussed with leaders attendance information, behaviour records, support plans for pupils with SEND, and safeguarding records.
- The inspectors considered responses in Ofsted Parent View and met with parents at the school gate.

Inspection team

Gareth Simons, lead inspector

Seconded Inspector

Teresa Hill

Ofsted Inspector

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