

Inspection of Chester Blue Coat Church of England Primary School

Walpole Street, Chester, Cheshire CH1 4HG

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?

Pupils are happy to attend this welcoming school. Leaders and staff are ambitious for the achievement of all pupils, including those with special education needs and/or disabilities (SEND). They also ensure that pupils' experiences contribute to the vision of 'doing everything in love; go and do likewise'. Pupils achieve well in the majority of subjects.

Leaders have created a strong sense of inclusion and community at the school. Pupils and families are proud to share their cultural heritage with other members of the school community. This includes events organised to share food.

Pupils have an effective understanding of equality and diversity. They know that everyone is equal, regardless of any differences. Pupils flourish in leadership roles, such as play leaders or science ambassadors.

Pupils feel safe. Leaders deal with bullying effectively. Classrooms are typically calm. This allows pupils to do their best in lessons. Teachers have high expectations for behaviour. Pupils behave well.

Pupils enjoy learning and playing in the outdoors. This helps them to be active and healthy. Pupils also take part in a range of activities after school, including tennis, hockey and gymnastics. They participate in interesting trips and visits, including adventurous outdoor activities.

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

Leaders have designed an ambitious curriculum for pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, those with SEND and those who speak English as an additional language. Teachers are well trained to deliver the curriculum. Leaders support new arrivals to the school effectively.

In a few subjects, leaders have not identified the well-ordered steps in learning from the early years through to Year 1 and throughout key stages 1 and 2. Leaders have not fully considered how learning in these subjects will build important foundations for pupils' future learning.

Teachers check how well pupils are remembering what they have learned in lessons. This helps them to identify which pupils need more help or guidance. Where more help is needed, teachers usually act swiftly to arrange extra support for learning.

In most subjects, leaders check how well the curriculum supports pupils' learning. This provides subject leaders with a clear understanding of how the curriculum helps pupils to increase their knowledge successfully over time. In a few subjects, the checks on the curriculum and how well it is implemented are less well developed. This prevents subject leaders from fully understanding the impact of the curriculum on how well pupils remember their learning over time in these subjects.

Leaders have introduced a clearly sequenced phonics curriculum. Teachers in the early years and in key stage 1 build pupils' phonics knowledge skilfully. They make sure that pupils read books that are well matched to their phonics knowledge. Teachers are swift to spot any pupils who may be falling behind with their reading. Staff help these pupils to catch up quickly. Older pupils are developing effective reading habits. They speak enthusiastically about the books they have studied.

Pupils behave well. There is little disruption to the learning of other pupils. They understand the importance of developing respectful relationships with people who may be different from themselves. Leaders make sure that pupils understand a range of important topics, such as fundamental British values. Pastoral support for pupils is effective. During the school holidays, school staff support families by providing a variety of activities for vulnerable pupils.

Children in the early years settle into school life quickly. They have a well-developed understanding of the classroom routines. Leaders ensure that they have ample opportunities to explore the outdoors. This helps children to develop confidence and independence. Children in the early years are well prepared for the continuation of their learning in Year 1. Across the school, teachers encourage pupils, including children in the early years, to extend their vocabulary.

Leaders ensure that pupils with SEND are identified accurately. Detailed learning plans set out precisely the help that these pupils should receive in school. These plans are well implemented and this enables pupils with SEND to access the same curriculum as other pupils. Staff work closely with outside agencies and specialist providers to ensure that pupils with SEND receive the support that they need.

Governors know the school and its community well. They are well informed about the quality of education that pupils receive. Governors worked effectively to check that leaders addressed the areas identified for improvement at the last inspection.

Governors and leaders take staff's workload and well-being into consideration when making decisions about the school. Staff feel respected and valued. They appreciate the opportunities that they have to participate in professional development and training.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff at all levels receive appropriate safeguarding training. They use the school's processes and procedures well to promptly report any concerns they may have about a pupils' safety or well-being. Leaders keep meticulous records and diligently follow up on any emerging concerns. They work in partnership with outside agencies to ensure that pupils and their families receive the support that they need in a timely manner.

Pupils are taught about how to keep themselves safe, including learning about online safety and road safety. They know how to keep themselves safe when learning outdoors.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a few subjects, pupils' learning does not build in a logical order as they move from the early years into Year 1 and beyond. Leaders cannot be sure that the right things are taught at the right time. This does not build firm foundations for pupils' future learning. Leaders should ensure that in these subjects, curriculum planning contains carefully ordered steps in learning, starting from the early years and continuing logically through the other year groups.
- In a few subjects, leaders' work to gather information on the impact of the curriculum is at an early stage. This means that in these subjects leaders do not have a clear enough understanding of how well the curriculum is implemented and the impact it has on pupils' learning. Leaders should ensure that in these subjects, they gather the information they need to check that the curriculum is well implemented and is helping pupils to build up their knowledge securely over time.

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	136806
Local authority	Cheshire West and Chester
Inspection number	10256060
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	402
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Christine Russell
Headteacher	Matthew Hover
Website	www.chesterbluecoatce.cheshire.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	12 December 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Leaders do not make use of any alternative providers for pupils.
- This school is a Church of England voluntary-aided school. The last section 48 inspection took place in March 2022.

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 of the school.
- Inspectors spoke with the headteacher, the deputy headteachers and with other leaders and members of staff. They also spoke with members of the governing body.
- Inspectors also spoke with a representative of the diocese and the local authority. They also spoke with the school's improvement partner.

- Inspectors looked at a range of documents and spoke with leaders about the school's arrangements to safeguard pupils.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics, science, music and physical education. They talked with curriculum leaders of these subject areas. Inspectors also visited lessons, looked at examples of pupils' work, held discussions with teachers and talked with pupils. Inspectors also observed some pupils reading to staff.
- Inspectors also considered other subjects. They discussed the curriculums with leaders and looked at pupils' work.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in class and as they moved around school. They also observed pupils in the dining hall and playing outside at lunchtime.
- Inspectors spoke with two groups of pupils about their experiences at school.
- Inspectors looked at the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses. They also met with parents before school to find out their views of the school.
- Inspectors also considered the responses to Ofsted's online survey for staff and for pupils.

Inspection team

Ian Shackleton, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Moira Loftus	Ofsted Inspector
Chris McDonald	Ofsted Inspector

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