

Inspection of a good school: St Dubricius Church of England Voluntary Aided School

Parsons Street, Porlock, Minehead, Somerset TA24 8QJ

Inspection date:

21 February 2023

Outcome

St Dubricius Church of England Voluntary Aided School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

St Dubricius is a happy and inclusive school. Pupils are well cared for. Adults' relationships with pupils are warm and nurturing. Pupils feel safe. Older pupils understand what bullying is, but say that it rarely happens. They have confidence in staff to deal with any incidents effectively.

Staff take a positive approach to supporting pupils to manage their own behaviour. Pupils, including children in Nursery, are interested in their learning and behave well. At playtimes, pupils take turns and show good manners towards each other. Pupils take pride in their school. They feel known as individuals. For example, all pupils receive the gift of a book on their birthday. An ethos of celebrating success runs across all aspects of school life.

Pupils talk confidently about the Christian values of the school. Links with the neighbouring church are strong. For example, many pupils attend a 'Jesus and Me' after-school club. Children in Nursery visit residents in a local care home. These activities help pupils to learn more about their place in the world and how to be kind, respectful citizens. Pupils participate in a range of sporting activities beyond the curriculum. This helps them to understand the importance of being physically active.

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

Leaders are ambitious for pupils. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), learn the full breadth of curriculum subjects. Subject leaders have carefully planned for the knowledge that pupils need to learn. Leaders have recently reviewed and made improvements to the curriculum for children in the early years foundation stage. However, leaders have not fully aligned the early years curriculum with

that of the wider school, so that it links to what children need to know to be ready for Year 1.

Pupils successfully build their knowledge and skills over time. For example, in art, pupils learn how to look critically at works of art. At the same time, they experiment with different artistic techniques. Pupils then combine what they have learned to produce their own artwork. Pupils are rightly proud of what they create.

Teachers regularly check what pupils know. They use this insight to decide what to teach next or whether to provide pupils with additional support. For example, leaders have reviewed the mathematics curriculum and have introduced new teaching approaches. Staff are highly positive about these changes. Pupils and children in early years remember basic facts about numbers and use these to calculate confidently.

Leaders use their expert knowledge to meet the needs of pupils with complex medical conditions. For example, leaders organise specific training for staff and have created a sensory room. Leaders share information with all staff about the needs of pupils with SEND. Staff use this information to help pupils follow the curriculum successfully.

Leaders are passionate about encouraging pupils to read. Pupils, including children in early years, listen to a variety of stories and rhymes. Staff introduce pupils to a wide range of diverse and challenging texts, while also responding to pupils' interests.

Pupils at the early stages of reading follow a structured phonics programme. All staff have received appropriate training to teach this. Younger pupils read books that match the sounds they know. This builds their confidence and fluency. Staff track pupils' progress carefully and make sure that they receive the right level of support.

Pupils understand the importance of respect and tolerance. They learn about different beliefs and cultures. They learn appropriately how to stay safe when online.

Most parents and carers are positive about the education the school provides for their child. However, a minority say that communication about their child's progress or changes taking place in the school is not frequent or detailed enough.

Governors provide effective support and challenge to leaders. They are a visible presence for staff and represent the school in the community. Leaders, including governors, have created an environment in which staff feel valued. School leaders manage staff's workload and ensure their well-being effectively. Leaders provide staff with high-quality, professional training. Staff talk positively about the impact of this on their subject expertise.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and staff are vigilant in ensuring pupils' safety. Staff know that keeping children safe is a collective responsibility. Staff and governors receive appropriate training. The

recruitment processes that ensure staff are suitable to work with children are rigorous and regularly reviewed.

Relationships between staff and pupils are strong. This allows staff to recognise any changes in a pupil's behaviour quickly. Where necessary, leaders work effectively with external agencies to help pupils and their families.

Pupils receive appropriate guidance on how to keep themselves safe. Leaders also provide parents with helpful information. Older pupils know whom they would talk to at school if they needed support.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some parents do not feel that the school communicates well with them about their child or about changes that affect school life. This can lead to the partnership between school and home being weakened. Leaders should ensure that they develop stronger channels of communication with parents to allow them to work together.
- Subject leaders do not have a detailed enough understanding of the curriculum in the early years foundation stage. As a result, learning in key stage 1 does not always build effectively on what pupils already know and can do. Leaders should ensure that the curriculum in early years is effectively integrated with that of the wider school.

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 May 2013.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use 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	123837
Local authority	Somerset
Inspection number	10240265
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3 to 9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	87
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Helen Jenkinson and Frances Nicholson (Co-chairs)
Headteacher	Naomi Philp
Website	www.stdubriciuscofeschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	30 March 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- St Dubricius is a Church of England voluntary-aided school. Its most recent section 48 inspection for schools of a religious character took place in July 2022.
- Since the previous inspection, a new head of school and an executive headteacher have been appointed.
- The school has Nursery provision for children aged three and four years.
- The school does not use alternative provision.

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.
- Inspectors held discussions with the executive headteacher, the head of school, the special educational needs coordinator, curriculum/key stage leaders and a group of governors.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics and art. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, looked at curriculum planning, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors scrutinised the single central record of adults working in the school. The lead inspector met with the designated safeguarding lead to consider how well the school identifies pupils who are at risk and engages with external services. Inspectors also spoke with a range of pupils and staff about safeguarding.
- Inspectors considered responses to the online survey for parents, Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. Inspectors also considered responses to the staff survey and responses to the survey for pupils.

Inspection team

Kelly Olive, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Wendy Marriott

Ofsted Inspector

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