

Inspection of Castle Primary School

Barrington Street, Tiverton, Devon EX16 6QR

Inspection dates: 21 and 22 February 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?

Castle Primary School is a caring and inclusive place to learn. The 'castle' values of consideration, aspiration and teamwork are clear in all that pupils do. Pupils are polite and kind. Parents are proud of the nurturing ethos that leaders provide. They say that their children settle into the school well and look forward to attending each day.

Staff have high expectations of all pupils. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) receive the help they need to learn well. Leaders have no limits on what pupils can achieve.

Pupils behave well around school. Pupils and staff are clear about how behaviour is managed. Pupils believe you should 'treat people how you want to be treated'. Staff provide effective support to deal with any pupils who present challenging behaviour. Pupils know what bullying is and say that it does happen, but most pupils are confident that staff will deal with it. Most parents think that bullying is dealt with well.

There are strong relationships between pupils and staff. Pupils are well cared for and they feel happy and safe. As a result, they enjoy coming to school.

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

Leaders are determined to provide the very best education and care for pupils. Leaders have designed an ambitious curriculum for all pupils, including those who are disadvantaged and those with SEND. Children in the early years have a strong start to their education.

Leaders have identified the most important knowledge that pupils need to learn in each subject. In most subjects, pupils are able to know more, do more and remember more over time. Teachers help pupils to practise and remember prior knowledge, skills and vocabulary across most subjects well. Pupils have frequent opportunities to recall previous learning. However, leaders know that some subjects need further development. Teachers' subject knowledge is not yet secure in some subject areas. In these subjects, pupils do not learn as well in lessons.

Leaders prioritise reading. They make sure there is a consistent approach to the teaching of phonics. Children start to learn to read as soon as they begin in Reception Year. Pupils read well with fluency and accuracy. Pupils read books that match the sounds they know. Teachers and teaching assistants have a secure knowledge of how to teach early reading. They check pupils' phonics knowledge and quickly spot those who need help. These pupils have appropriate extra practice. Pupils enjoy reading and talk enthusiastically about books. Leaders choose high-quality reading books to be shared in classes. Leaders provide regular support and guidance. Staff appreciate this supportive approach. It gives them the knowledge and confidence to teach early reading with skill.

Staff have consistently high expectations for pupils' behaviour. There is a calm and orderly environment in the school. This begins in the early years, where children follow clear routines. They want to behave well because it is 'nice to be kind to each other'. Children play well together. They take turns sensibly and share. They talk well with each other and adults.

Leaders have developed a well-structured curriculum for pupils' personal development. Pupils learn about relationships and how to look after their health. Pupils have a secure understanding of British values. Pupils learn about other cultures, faiths and backgrounds. They understand the importance of respect and tolerance. Leaders provide some opportunities for pupils to hold roles of responsibility, such as librarians, play leaders and the school council. Pupils carry out these duties with pride. Even so, the range of other opportunities for pupils to develop their talents and interests is limited.

Leaders and staff work well together to meet the needs of pupils with SEND. Leaders identify and assess their needs quickly. Staff gather information to identify pupils' needs from parents and external specialists. In classrooms, pupils with SEND are well cared for. Teachers make suitable adaptations for pupils. As a result, most pupils with SEND can follow the same curriculum as their peers and they thrive.

Governors have an accurate view of the school's strengths and priorities for improvement. They provide appropriate support and challenge to school leaders. Staff feel well supported in their roles. They say that leaders consider their workload and well-being. Staff are proud to work at the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Safeguarding is a whole-school priority. Staff know the importance of being alert to any concerns so that support can be given quickly.

Leaders make sure that staff are vigilant through regular and up-to-date training. Staff know what to do if they have a concern about a pupil. Leaders respond quickly when staff raise concerns about pupils. Recruitment checks are completed to ensure that adults are suitable to work in school.

Pupils feel confident about sharing concerns with a trusted adult in school. Through school policies and the curriculum, pupils develop a good awareness of healthy relationships and keeping safe, including online safety.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, teachers do not have strong subject knowledge. As a result, learning activities do not always provide pupils with opportunities to secure and

deepen their knowledge. Leaders need to ensure that teachers improve their knowledge in these subjects.

- Leaders do not provide a wide range of opportunities for pupils outside the classroom. As a result, pupils are not always able to develop their talents and interests. Leaders need to ensure that opportunities are provided for pupils to nurture, develop and stretch their talents and interests.

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	113340
Local authority	Devon
Inspection number	10256680
Type of school	Primary
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	310
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Vicky Hill
Headteacher	Catherine Noble
Website	www.castletiverton.school
Dates of previous inspection	18 and 19 July 2017, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The governing body has several newly appointed members.
- The school does not use 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. 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 headteacher, governors, senior leaders, teachers and support staff.
- The lead inspector held a phone conversation with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors reviewed documentation and spoke with leaders, staff and pupils to evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding. Inspectors checked the single central

record of adults working in the school and looked at safeguarding records. Inspectors reviewed attendance records and the school's behaviour and bullying records.

- The inspection team carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics, geography and art. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and considered samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors met with the special educational needs coordinator to consider the quality of provision for pupils with SEND.
- Inspectors observed the behaviour of pupils in classrooms and around school.
- Inspectors gathered parents' views by considering responses to Ofsted Parent View, including free-text comments from parents, and by talking to parents at the start of the day. They also reviewed the school's own parent and carer survey.
- Inspectors gathered the views of a range of pupils by considering the pupil survey and through discussions with pupils.
- Inspectors held discussions with staff and considered responses to the Ofsted staff survey.

Inspection team

Sarah Ryder, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Martin Greenwood	Ofsted Inspector
Nicolle Deighton	Ofsted Inspector

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