

Inspection of Christ Church CofE Primary Academy

William Street, Fenton, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire ST4 2JG

Inspection dates: 25 and 26 April 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	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

What is it like to attend this school?

At Christ Church, the school's motto of 'Learning with God and each other to be the best we can be' is evident in all aspects of leaders' work. Leaders have high aspirations for all pupils and want them to thrive in learning and life. They ensure that all pupils enjoy a visit to London and a residential visit, attend a live performance, visit an art gallery and participate in a sporting event during their time at school.

Pupils are happy to come to school and feel safe and well cared for. Bullying is uncommon. However, if it should occur, pupils are confident that teachers will sort it out. One parent was typical of many when they stated, 'My child is very happy and looks forward to going to school every day'.

Pupils behave well during lessons, around school and at playtimes. They are well rewarded for this behaviour. Pupils have positive attitudes towards learning.

Pupils enjoy responsibilities that promote their independence and prepare them for the future. These responsibilities start in early years. Pupils can be ambassadors in friendship, sports, gardening, library and health and safety. They are proud of their roles and say, 'it makes us feel good to know we are helping other people'.

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

Leaders and staff have worked hard to improve the school's curriculum. They have high aspirations for all children. Curriculum leaders have considered thoughtfully the order in which pupils learn key facts and ideas. Leaders have set out the important information that pupils need to remember each term and year in most subjects, including in the early years curriculum. This helps all pupils to make progress and learn well.

In many subjects, such as mathematics, reading and history, the curriculums set out precisely the knowledge pupils need to remember. These curriculums support teachers to make careful checks on what pupils should know. Teachers use information from these checks well to spot pupils who need extra help and to identify gaps in pupils' learning. However, in some subjects the curriculum is less precise. In these subjects, the knowledge that teachers expect pupils to learn is not always identified clearly. This slows pupils' learning in these subjects. Leaders recognise this and have plans in place to develop the curriculum further.

Children learn to read as soon as they are ready. Phonics teaching starts in Nursery and prepares children well for starting Reception. Teachers follow a well-planned sequence of lessons that allow pupils to learn new sounds quickly and securely. The learning environment is designed to immerse children in language. Activities are designed to help children practise the skills of early reading. Any pupil falling behind

in phonics gets extra help so they can catch up. Consequently, most pupils in Reception and Year 1 learn to read well.

Pupils develop a love of reading. Teachers read often to them with expression and engagement. Pupils are rewarded for reading at home and speak keenly about their favourite books. One parent was typical when they said, 'He is coming on really well, he has really started to enjoy reading and is reading at home'.

The leader responsible for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) ensures that pupils receive the right support when they need it. Leaders have trained staff in how to identify pupils with specific needs. This means that adults can help all pupils to access the curriculum and learn it well.

Leaders are committed to giving pupils a wide range of experiences in and out of school and to develop them as individuals. For example, pupils who are interested in music are given the opportunity to learn a musical instrument. Pupils celebrate differences among their friendship groups, for example by sharing mehndi hand painting with all of their friends, so that they understand different cultures. The school's values of respect, endurance and friendship underpin all of this work.

Leaders consider staff's well-being and workload. The school has been recognised with a national award for well-being. Staff feel that leaders consider their workload when implementing new initiatives and make changes in relation to this, for example when making changes to the school's marking policy.

The trust ensures that leaders receive effective support and challenge when needed. For example, curriculum leaders across the trust meet regularly to discuss their subject. Those responsible for governance ask searching questions and have an accurate view of the school. This helps them in their duty to hold leaders to account.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff know that safeguarding pupils is very important. Leaders train staff so they know what to do if they have any concerns about pupils' well-being or safety. Records show that leaders understand the needs of vulnerable pupils. Quick responses provide support for pupils and their families when needed.

Pupils know how to keep themselves safe both in their locality and when using the internet. Pupil health and safety ambassadors help to ensure that pupils are safe in school.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a small number of subjects, leaders have not ensured that teachers are clear about what pupils should learn at different points. This means that some pupils do not know and remember some essential knowledge. Leaders should make sure that teachers know what pupils need to learn and when, and have the necessary knowledge and expertise to deliver the intended curriculums well.

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	146155
Local authority	Stoke-on-Trent
Inspection number	10268156
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	209
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Andy Colclough
Principal	Paula Scattergood
Website	www.christchurchfenton.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Leaders do not make use of any alternative provision.
- The school is within the Diocese of Lichfield. Its most recent section 48 inspection took place in September 2016. Section 48 inspections were suspended due to the COVID-19 pandemic. They restarted in September 2021. The school's next section 48 inspection will take place within eight years of the previous inspection.

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.
- During the inspection, the lead inspector held meetings with the principal. He also met three members of the governing body, including the chair of governors. He met with two members of the multi academy trust, including the chief executive officer of the trust.

- The lead inspector held telephone conversations with representatives of the diocese and the local authority.
- The inspectors viewed a range of safeguarding documentation. They examined checks on safer recruitment and spoke with members of staff to check their safeguarding knowledge.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics, design and technology and history. They met with subject leaders, visited lessons, spoke with teachers and pupils and viewed examples of pupils' work.
- An inspector observed children in the early years and pupils in key stage 1 read to a trusted adult.
- The inspectors spoke with members of staff about their workload and well-being.
- The inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around school.
- The inspectors considered the responses, including the free-text comments, to Ofsted Parent View. They also considered the responses to the staff and pupil surveys. An inspector also spoke to parents and carers at the end of the school day.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documentation provided by the school. This included the school's self-evaluation, school improvement priorities, school policies, curriculum documents, SEND records, behaviour records, attendance records and minutes of meetings held by the governing body.

Inspection team

Barry Yeadsley, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Melanie Callaghan-Lewis

Ofsted Inspector

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