

Inspection of Chirton Church of England Primary School

The Street, Chirton, Devizes, Wiltshire SN10 3QS

Inspection dates: 17 and 18 May 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Outstanding
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?

Chirton Church of England Primary is a school where everyone is welcome and accepted. Pupils thrive in a caring and nurturing environment. The school's Christian values, such as 'trust, love and equality', are central to day-to-day life at the school. They guide pupils successfully in all they do.

Leaders and staff expect pupils to aim high. They strive for them to be responsible, respectful and resilient. Pupils say that teachers 'push you out of your comfort zone in a good way'. This is because staff have created a culture where it is safe to ask for help and learn from mistakes.

Pupils need few reminders about how to behave. They choose to do the right thing and respond well to the 'big heart chart' and house points. Their behaviour seldom disrupts learning.

Leaders plan rich experiences beyond the classroom to complement pupils' learning. The weekly sessions in the forest school are overwhelmingly popular. Here, staff provide practical activities to reinforce and enhance learning.

Pupils eagerly take on leadership responsibilities across the school. They fulfil their roles as digital leaders, reading buddies and helpful heart playground monitors with maturity. Pupils learn to be positive advocates for themselves and others.

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

Leaders place reading at the centre of the curriculum. The new library is an inviting place for pupils to immerse themselves in books. Reading ambassadors are proud to share stories with younger children. Teachers select high-quality literature to build pupils' vocabulary and deepen their general knowledge. Older pupils speak animatedly about themes from the books they read. For example, they know the importance of challenging gender stereotypes and valuing diversity. Pupils say, 'We learn not to judge someone for who they are.' Pupils leave the school as capable readers.

The new and rigorous approach to phonics works well. Most children in Reception Year can read and write the sounds they have learned. Pupils read books matched to the sounds they know. This helps them become confident and fluent readers. If pupils struggle, staff show them how to blend sounds together to read words. They provide extra practice for those who need it. Teachers make sure that no pupil is left behind when learning to read.

Leaders have thought carefully about the curriculum design for mixed-age classes. Staff have identified the knowledge that pupils need to learn. Where subjects are well established, pupils confidently remember what they have learned. For example, pupils in Years 2 and 3 can use timelines to order historical events. The youngest

children can describe what happens when you double and halve numbers. However, leaders have not clearly highlighted the key concepts that pupils need to remember and revisit in all subjects. This makes it more difficult for pupils to link existing knowledge to new learning. Furthermore, a minority of subjects are at an early stage of development. In these subjects, pupils do not yet have the in-depth knowledge and understanding as they do in other areas.

Teachers use ongoing assessment well to find out how pupils are doing. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) have their needs identified early. Staff adapt their approach through the use of resources and additional support. This allows pupils with SEND to learn the same ambitious curriculum as others. Consequently, they achieve well from their starting points.

Pupils' conduct is positive. They greet visitors warmly and show respect in their interactions with adults. Pupils value the trust that staff place in them to manage their behaviour.

Leaders' work to develop pupils' opportunities beyond the academic is very impressive. To broaden pupils' talents and interests, they take part in a local Eisteddfod and perform at a singing concert in London. Pupils' service to the school and the wider community is commendable. They raise money for charities and plant trees in the village. Pupils develop a deep understanding of cultures and faiths that differ from their own. For example, they speak to a rabbi about Jewish customs and visit a mosque to support their learning about Islam. Leaders ensure that pupils grow into well-rounded youngsters.

The headteacher is determined that every child succeeds. She has cultivated a strong spirit of teamwork. Staff are proud to work at the school. They appreciate leaders' efforts to manage their workload and well-being. Governors and trust leaders strike the right balance of challenge and support to help the school progress.

An overwhelming majority of parents hold the school in high regard. Many say they are fortunate to be part of the 'little school with the big heart'.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders prioritise pupils' safety. They train staff in relevant safeguarding. Staff are knowledgeable. They recognise signs of potential harm in pupils. Leaders act swiftly when staff or pupils raise concerns. Governors test out the school's procedures. For example, they check that staff are suitable to work with pupils. Consequently, leaders actively promote a culture of vigilance.

Pupils feel safe. They trust that adults will listen to them if they have any worries. The curriculum teaches pupils how to stay safe on the roads, in the outdoor classroom and online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some of the wider curriculum subjects, leaders have not clearly highlighted the key concepts that pupils need to remember and revisit. This makes it more difficult for pupils to link existing knowledge to new learning. Leaders need to prioritise and emphasise the essential knowledge, and then ensure that pupils establish deeper connections with their learning over time.
- In a minority of subjects, staff are in the initial phase of implementing the recently refined curriculums. Therefore, pupils are at the early stage of developing the knowledge they need. Leaders need to ensure that pupils can apply their knowledge in these subjects with the same confidence as they do in other areas of the curriculum.

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	146902
Local authority	Wiltshire
Inspection number	10268497
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	77
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Roger Townsend
Headteacher	Amy Bekker Wrench
Website	www.chirtonschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school is part of Equa, a multi-academy trust of primary and secondary schools in Wiltshire.
- The school has an on-site pre-school provision. It is managed by a separate committee.
- The school does not use any registered alternative provision.
- The school is in the Diocese of Salisbury. At the most recent section 48 inspection of the school, carried out in March 2022, the school was judged to be good overall.

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.

- Inspectors met with the headteacher, other school staff and the special educational needs and disability coordinator. The lead inspector also met with governors, the chief executive officer and director of primary education.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, 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.
- Inspectors met with subject leaders and looked more widely at documentation in geography and design technology.
- The lead inspector listened to pupils in Years 1, 2 and 3 read to an adult.
- Inspectors reviewed safeguarding by discussing policy and process with the designated safeguarding leader and other staff. The lead inspector checked safer recruitment practice and scrutinised records relating to safeguarding.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school site. They spoke with pupils and staff about behaviour. Inspectors asked pupils about their experiences in the school, including any experiences of bullying.
- Inspectors spoke with a range of staff to discuss how leaders support their workload and well-being.
- An inspector spoke to parents at the end of the school day.
- Inspectors considered responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, including free-text comments, and responses to the staff and pupil survey.

Inspection team

Dale Burr, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

David New

Ofsted Inspector

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