

Inspection of a good school: Chasetown Community School

Church Street, Chasetown, Burntwood, Staffordshire WS7 3QL

Inspection dates: 13 and 14 June 2023

Outcome

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of good as a result of this ungraded (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might not be as high if a graded (section 5) inspection were carried out now. Inspectors are recommending the next inspection to be a graded inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Chasetown Community School is a welcoming and caring place. Leaders have created a safe and nurturing environment. Pupils are happy and welcoming to visitors. They are keen to talk about the help they get at school.

All pupils have an education, health and care plan (EHC plan). Pupils' main areas of need are social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) and autism spectrum disorder (ASD). Staff are highly skilled in understanding pupils' specific needs. Pupils receive effective support to meet their individual needs as a result. Pupils are taught different ways to manage their own behaviours and emotions successfully. Leaders understand how behaviours are a way for pupils to communicate their voice. Every child's voice is listened to attentively by all staff.

Leaders have high expectations for all pupils. However, the way the curriculum is designed does not allow pupils to achieve as highly as they could in many subjects. In the wider curriculum, leaders have not identified the key knowledge and vocabulary they want pupils to learn and in which order. Additionally, the curriculum for pupils moving between key stage 2 and key stage 3 is implemented in different ways. This means that pupils learn in a disjointed way.

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

The curriculum covers the breadth of the national curriculum. In some subjects, such as mathematics, reading and personal, social and emotional health (PSHE), the curriculum is ambitious, and well planned and sequenced. In PSHE, leaders have made deliberate sequencing choices to meet the needs of their pupils. Staff cover sensitive topics effectively. They take into consideration each child's special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) when planning lessons. Staff and leaders know the importance of PSHE

in all aspects of school life. Guest speakers are invited to discuss knife crime, first aid and bullying. This has been intentionally and carefully planned by leaders to successfully support the needs of pupils.

However, leaders have not identified the key knowledge they want pupils to learn over time in the foundation subjects. Leaders rely on teachers to identify this for their individual pupils. This means pupils do not build knowledge over time in a sequential way. This is hindering pupils' progress in these subjects. Some curriculum leaders do not know how to check the impact of their subject on pupils' learning well enough. Some are also very new to their roles. They do not yet know how to support whole-school development of their subject.

Reading is a high priority. There is an effective phonics programme in place. Staff teach this consistently well. Pupils join the school from other settings at different stages of their education. Their reading is assessed immediately and support is put in place quickly. Many pupils are not able to read fluently when they start. As a result, many pupils do not have a positive view of reading. Leaders are aware of this. Staff provide many opportunities for pupils to enjoy books and reading throughout the day. This is beginning to improve pupils' attitudes towards reading.

Behaviours are managed well during lessons most of the time. Low-level disruptive behaviours are quickly addressed. Staff take the time to support pupils in understanding and improving their behaviour. Leaders show expert knowledge in how to support pupils' behaviours and SEMH needs. There is an effective training programme in place for all staff. Pupils' SEND needs are identified quickly. Pupils' individual targets and SEND plans are reviewed regularly with parents and carers.

Pupils experience a range of enrichment opportunities. All pupils have access to these, including pupils who are disadvantaged. Pupils perform and sing on stage at public events. They play sports with other schools. This builds pupils' confidence. Many pupils learn how to play musical instruments through individual tuition in school.

There is an active school council in place. Members have set up a school café, where pupils can buy refreshments. They meet community members at the local church. Pupils learn to be polite, use their manners and interact with members of the public. Some pupils have extra responsibilities, such as being peer mentors. They help other pupils talk about their worries.

There is currently no appropriately planned offer in place for careers education, information, advice and guidance. Leaders and governors have not considered what independent careers guidance should be planned and offered to pupils in key stage 3. This means pupils do not know what opportunities are available to gain qualifications or learn about future careers.

Leaders and governors engage well with staff. Staff feel well supported to carry out their roles effectively.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Safeguarding is of the highest priority. There is a strong culture of keeping pupils safe in and out of school. Staff report all low-level concerns. They know how these can quickly build a picture about pupils' safety. Leaders consistently analyse patterns and trends. They use this information to put in place targeted and effective training. All staff are vigilant to potential signs of abuse. Leaders have strong working relationships with external agencies. Support for families is put in place quickly as a result.

Leaders conduct appropriate checks when appointing new staff.

The curriculum teaches pupils about the local safeguarding risks, such as the dangers of knife crimes.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Pupils in key stage 3 do not have appropriate access to information or relevant engagement about the range of qualifications and career opportunities available to them. This means pupils do not know what opportunities are available to gain qualifications or know how to achieve their career aspirations. Leaders must ensure they meet the requirements of the provider access legislation.
- Leaders and governors have not identified the key knowledge and vocabulary they want pupils to learn, and in which order, in the foundation subjects well enough. This means pupils do not build knowledge over time in a sequential way, which is hindering their progress in the foundation subjects. Leaders need to ensure that the curriculum in the foundation subjects identifies the specific knowledge and vocabulary they want pupils to learn in a sequential way over time.
- The way the curriculum is planned and implemented is different in key stages 2 and 3. Pupils experience a disjointed curriculum as they move between the two key stages as a result. Leaders and governors should develop and implement a curriculum offer where pupils experience a greater coherence between key stage 2 and key stage 3.
- Some curriculum leaders do not have the necessary skills and knowledge to evaluate the impact of their subject on pupils' learning sufficiently well or to support whole-school development of their subject. This means that some subject leaders do not know how well the curriculum is implemented or know its impact on pupils, and means that the curriculum is underdeveloped in the foundation subjects. Leaders and governors should ensure that they provide new and less experienced subject leaders with the necessary skills and knowledge to play a full and effective role in strengthening the curriculum.

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 June 2013.

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	132731
Local authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	10269138
Type of school	Special
School category	Community special
Age range of pupils	7 to 13
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	84
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Steven Norman
Headteacher	Dr Linda James
Website	www.chasetowncommunity.staffs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	28 February 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- A new assistant headteacher took up post in April 2020.
- The chair of governors was not available during this inspection.
- All pupils have an EHC plan for SEMH difficulties. Pupils also have additional needs, such as ASD and speech, language, communication and interaction needs.
- The school uses one unregistered alternative provision.
- The school does not currently meet the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 7 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

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.
- The inspectors met with the headteacher, governors, the deputy headteacher, the assistant headteacher, subject leaders, teachers and pupils. They also talked informally

with parents, carers, transport escorts, drivers, staff and pupils to gather general information about school life.

- The lead inspector held a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics, PSHE and history. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with the areas of learning leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors also looked at additional areas of learning.
- Inspectors looked at individual pupils' EHC plans and checked these against the school's provision.
- The lead inspector observed pupils reading to a familiar adult.
- Inspectors spoke to groups of pupils formally and informally about their learning and experiences at school.
- Inspectors observed informal times to evaluate safeguarding and pupils' behaviour.
- Safeguarding documents were reviewed, including the checks that leaders make on staff's suitability to work with children. The inspectors examined how staff implement safeguarding policies and procedures effectively across the school.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View and the free-text responses received during the inspection.
- Inspectors reviewed the responses to Ofsted's staff survey.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documentation provided by the school. This included the school's self-evaluation, school policies, curriculum documents and SEND records.

Inspection team

Anna Vrahimi, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Jane Edgerton

Ofsted Inspector

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