

Inspection of a good school: Whitwick St John The Baptist Church of England Primary School

Parsonwood Hill, Whitwick, Coalville, Leicestershire LE67 5AT

Inspection dates:

27 and 28 June 2023

Outcome

Whitwick St John The Baptist Church of England Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils thrive in a happy and caring environment at Whitwick St John The Baptist. Leaders and staff share a vision for pupils to 'grow, achieve, bloom, repeat'. Pupils know the school's six 'root' Christian values well. These values guide their actions. Pupils talk confidently about diversity and equality. One pupil explained, 'Everybody has the chance to be who they are.'

Teachers have high expectations of what all pupils can achieve. In lessons, pupils are excited to learn. Poor behaviour is rare.

Pupils say they feel safe in the school. If they are worried, they know they can talk to their teachers or use the classroom 'worry boxes' or 'worry monsters' to share their concerns. Teachers help them to resolve any problems quickly.

Pupils are proud to hold positions of responsibility, such as team captains, playground pals and reading buddies. They enjoy playing many different sports and taking part in sporting events. Pupils in Years 2, 4 and 6 experience a wide variety of outdoor activities on residential trips. There is an active school choir that performs at community events. All Year 6 pupils take part in the school performance.

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

Leaders have developed an ambitious and interesting curriculum. Subject leaders have worked collaboratively with experts and leaders from other schools. They have identified what they want pupils to learn. The curriculum plans show how pupils will build their knowledge from the early years to be ready for key stage 3 when they leave this school. Some areas of the curriculum are still new. Leaders plan to improve them further. In a

small minority of subjects, curriculum plans do not yet define knowledge precisely enough.

Pupils enjoy reading. There are many opportunities for them to read in classrooms and in the well-resourced library. Teachers in the early years and key stage 1 teach phonics well so that pupils learn the sounds and how to blend them accurately. Pupils practise reading from books that match the sounds they know. Teachers check pupils' reading progress often. They make sure that pupils who struggle with reading get extra help quickly.

In mathematics lessons, teachers explain new knowledge clearly. Pupils have many opportunities to discuss their ideas with each other. They share their reasoning confidently. Pupils revisit important topics often so that they remember the knowledge they need to solve problems. In the early years, children gain a good understanding of important number facts through well-planned activities. In art lessons, pupils experience a diverse range of different artists and styles. Teachers encourage them to be creative and experiment with their own ideas. Pupils learn to draw, paint and use different materials in their work. They enjoy art lessons.

In all subjects, teachers routinely check what pupils can remember. They ask pupils questions that help them recall key facts. Teachers present new knowledge in a way that helps pupils to build on what they know already and deepen their understanding. In the early years, teachers encourage children to relate new knowledge to their own interests and experiences.

Teachers are ambitious for all pupils. Leaders know pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) well. They make sure that teachers know how to adapt lessons so that pupils with SEND can access all the same lessons as their peers.

Pupils show positive attitudes in lessons. They listen carefully to their teachers and try hard in their work. Teachers use clear routines that support pupils to behave well. They have high expectations for pupils' behaviour. Pupils are proud when they earn rewards for meeting expectations and working hard. Most pupils attend school well. Leaders provide support and encouragement to improve the attendance of pupils who do not attend as well as they should. As a result, the number of pupils who are absent from school too often has fallen significantly.

There is a well-planned curriculum for personal, social and health education (PSHE). Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe and healthy. Teachers deliver PSHE lessons well. Through the commitment to the school's Christian ethos and the PSHE programme, pupils develop mature attitudes. They are well prepared for their next steps in education and their lives in modern Britain.

Members of staff are proud and happy to work at the school. They say that leaders are considerate of their workload and well-being. The school's governors play an active role in the school. They provide leaders with valuable support and challenge to help continue to improve the curriculum to benefit all pupils. Parents are very positive about the school's provision.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have ensured a strong safeguarding culture in the school. They make sure that staff know how to identify when pupils may be at risk. There are clear procedures to follow so that pupils get any help they need. Leaders act quickly and keep detailed records. They work well with other agencies when they need to.

The school makes all appropriate checks on members of staff and visitors.

Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe, including online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some of the curriculum plans are still quite new. In a small number of foundation subjects, leaders have not yet precisely identified the knowledge that pupils need to learn at each stage. As a result, pupils do not always deepen their understanding or develop skills over time. Leaders need to ensure that all curriculum plans detail what components of knowledge pupils should learn, and the order in which they should learn them.

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 January 2014.

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	120171
Local authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	10298411
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	372
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Debbie May
Headteacher	Mrs Helen Noon
Website	www.whitwickce.leics.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	5 June 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The headteacher and the deputy headteacher were appointed in 2018.
- This is a Church of England School. The most recent section 48 inspection took place in May 2022. This is an inspection of the school's religious character.
- The school uses no alternative providers.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector met with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, the special educational needs coordinator and other school leaders.
- The inspector met with the chair and the vice-chair of the governing body.
- The inspector spoke to a representative of Leicestershire local authority.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics and art. 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. The lead inspector observed some pupils reading to their teacher.

- The inspector also looked at curriculum plans and samples of pupils' work for some other subjects.
- The inspector evaluated the effectiveness of safeguarding by reviewing the school's record of pre-employment checks, reviewing other records and holding discussions with leaders, staff and pupils.
- The inspector looked at behaviour and attendance records and discussed these with leaders.
- The inspector considered the responses to parent and staff surveys.
- The inspector spoke with pupils and staff to hear their experiences of the school.

Inspection team

John Spragg, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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