

Inspection of a good school: Morchard Bishop Church of England Primary School

Church Street, Morchard Bishop, Crediton, Devon EX17 6PJ

Inspection dates:

6 July 2023

Outcome

Morchard Bishop Church of England Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils have had a part in developing the school's values and are deeply committed to these. They confidently explain the qualities they learn about in school, such as empathy and resilience. The school sets out to give pupils a strong sense of belonging and community. Pupils say that the school nurtures them as individuals.

In the pre-school, well-established routines make for a purposeful atmosphere. Here, children learn the expectations of them. This means that they know how to behave well once they reach the Reception class. They already demonstrate the curiosity and resilience that form part of the school's values system.

Pupils' good behaviour throughout the school means that they focus on their learning in class. Older pupils recognise that expectations of them have risen. They are quick to identify any behaviour that falls short. There are, however, some occasions where pupils and parents would like to see staff insist on good conduct more firmly.

Opportunities to be active are plentiful. Pupils enjoy a wide range of sporting and adventurous activities, tournaments and trips. There is a diverse range of clubs, including gardening, art and construction. Pupils participate well, with many attending several of these each week.

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

In the past year, leaders have developed the curriculum for early reading and mathematics considerably. Staff's confidence in teaching from new plans and resources is growing. Trust leaders have supported the school by developing the wider curriculum. Some subjects, such as physical education (PE), have quickly become a strength of the school. Here, for example, subject specialists work alongside school staff to help pupils to extend their subject knowledge.

The curriculum for early reading is having a strong positive impact for pupils in Reception and key stage 1. Pupils who find learning to read more difficult receive effective support that helps them to catch up. Leaders are not complacent. They have plans to bring early reading experts into the school to provide further training to help staff to embed the most effective practices.

A key priority for leaders has been to strengthen the teaching of mathematics. Pupils now revisit learning regularly and remember the curriculum increasingly well. Leaders understand the importance of developing pupils' mathematical language. They encourage pupils to talk through their reasoning. Leaders recognise the need to sustain their focus on developing teachers' subject knowledge, so that they can select the best ways to support pupils' learning.

In the pre-school, children are introduced to the songs and routines they will use in the Reception class. There is a consistent focus on the development of pupils' language and lots of opportunity for pupils to talk about books. All of this helps children to get off to a flying start once they begin to learn about letters and sounds. Leaders identify children who might need support with their speech and language development and design activities to help them with this.

Despite positive improvements to the quality of education, some parents express a lack of confidence in the support provided to pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). This is because leaders do not work collaboratively enough with parents, so that everyone understands how they can best meet pupils' needs.

Pupils with SEND participate successfully in the full curriculum. They are usually well supported. However, at times, the support that is planned is not as effective as leaders intend.

The school's distinctive ethos is reflected in the attitudes that pupils develop. Pupils describe the school as a place for everyone. They are respectful and show interest and friendship towards people with different backgrounds and lifestyles. Pupils take on leadership responsibilities, such as sports and 'eco' leaders, or as members of the Year 6 worship team.

Leaders value staff. They engage with and support them well. Staff are supportive of the plans leaders have to further develop the school. Leaders from the trust and local governors know the school well and provide valuable challenge to school leaders. The school is benefiting positively from this determined and effective leadership.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff are vigilant and make detailed referrals of any concerns. Leaders refer matters to external agencies, where appropriate. Together, they ensure that pupils and families receive the help and support they need.

Trust leaders ensure that all checks about the suitability of staff to work at the school are complete and recorded clearly. Leaders in the school benefit from the expertise of a wider network of safeguarding leaders from across the trust. This helps leaders to remember that 'it could happen here'. Regular updates are shared with parents to promote the safety and well-being of pupils when online and in the community.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- At times, pupils with SEND do not receive support in the way that leaders intend. When this happens, pupils do not learn and develop as well as they could. This leads to a lack of confidence among some parents in the school's support for pupils with SEND. Leaders should ensure that staff regularly involve parents in the planning of support for pupils with SEND. This will reassure parents and help staff to gain a full understanding of pupils' needs.

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 predecessor school, Morchard Bishop Church of England Primary School, good in January 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

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| Unique reference number | 148743 |
| Local authority | Devon |
| Inspection number | 10287475 |
| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Academy converter |
| Age range of pupils | 2 to 11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 124 |
| Appropriate authority | Board of trustees |
| Chair | Cheryl Mathieson |
| Headteacher | Sam Butler |
| Website | www.morchardbishop.thelink.academy |
| Date of previous inspection | Not previously inspected |

Information about this school

- A new headteacher joined the school in September 2022.
- The school joined the Link Academies multi-academy trust in October 2021. The trust provides support for pupils with particular needs through an 'Inclusion Hub'.
- The school includes nursery provision for children aged two to four years.
- There is provision for childcare before and after school.
- The school does not use any alternative providers.

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.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, the director of education and chief executive officer for the multi-academy trust, the chair of the trust and a governor from the local board.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in reading, mathematics and PE. 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.

- To inspect safeguarding, the lead inspector met with the headteacher, who is the designated safeguarding lead, and reviewed the single central record of adults working in the school. Inspectors observed pupils in school and held discussions with groups of pupils and staff in order to understand the culture of safeguarding.
- Inspectors took into account the response to Ofsted's online survey for parents, 'Parent View', alongside the responses to the surveys for pupils and staff.

Inspection team

Lydia Pride, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Gavin Summerfield

His Majesty's Inspector

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