

# Inspection of Colwich CofE Primary School

Main Road, Colwich, Stafford, Staffordshire ST17 0XD

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Inspection dates: 26 and 27 September 2023

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Good</b>
Personal development	<b>Good</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Early years provision	<b>Good</b>
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

The headteacher of this school is Alison De Ste Croix. This school is part of Mid-Trent Multi Academy Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Paul Hayward, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Clive O'Donnell.

Ofsted has not previously inspected Colwich CofE Primary School as an academy under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 as, until November 2020, the school was exempted by law from routine inspection, so there has been a longer gap than usual between inspections.

Judgements in this report are based on the current inspection framework and also reflect changes that may have happened at any point since the last graded inspection of the predecessor school.

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils are proud to follow 'the Colwich way' of being kind, respectful and ready to learn. They show this through their words and actions. They are happy and safe. 'Friendship Fridays' are a pivotal point each week. Pupils and staff enjoy the activities they experience in their family groups. Shining through many conversations was the older pupils' commitment to helping younger pupils.

The school is ambitious for pupils to achieve well and to become caring citizens. These ambitions are realised. Pupils leave the school prepared for the next stage of their education. They show respect and kindness to each other and to staff. Pupils know about a range of ways to keep safe. They know when and how to ask for help, both from staff and external sources.

The school has made recent changes to the personal, social and health education curriculum. This is beginning to help pupils know more about fundamental British values. Pupils bring the school's golden rule to life as they treat others in the way they wish to be treated.

Pupils contribute positively to school life. They enjoy playing football and basketball using equipment they bought with money raised from selling toast.

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

Strong and effective leadership has resulted in successfully managing the changing circumstances of the school over time. Reducing classes, modified mixed-age class structures and staffing changes have meant leaders having to frequently reconsider and adapt the sequence of learning to fit the school organisation. They have done so with commitment and skill, always with a focus on prioritising what is right for pupils.

The partnership working between schools in the trust has made good use of the depth and breadth of expertise available. This is visible through several subjects. Reading is one of these subjects. The school has made astute decisions about who teaches phonics, and about when and how. The scheme in place is being followed with tenacity. Resources link closely to the focus of the current learning. Pupils learn to read well, and quickly become fluent readers. For the few pupils who need a little extra help, staff ensure it is readily available. This helps these pupils to move beyond what is tricky for them and to achieve success as readers.

Subjects across the curriculum are at different stages of development. All subjects have a clear overview of what will be taught, from Reception upwards. This is underpinned by what pupils should know at different points throughout the school. Some subjects have had extra work completed to enable staff to bring learning alive. Where this is the case, it is helping pupils to remember their learning. Art and design, history and mathematics are examples of where this work has been successful. In other subjects, there is a little more to do. Sometimes, teachers' use

of resources to support their teaching does not help pupils to learn as well as they might.

The school has not ensured that staff are clear about how and when to address pupils' errors in basic skills across the curriculum. Consequently, pupils often repeat errors, and this prevents them from working at a deeper level. Many parents appreciate all that the school does for their child. They share a sense of community and family. Parents recognise that their child is prepared for what comes next at school. A few rightly recognise that, on occasion, greater challenge could be present for their child.

Children in the early years soon settle well into school life. Watching the way staff and children interact is to see harmony in motion. There are strong and positive relationships between children and staff. This, coupled with staff's deep knowledge of each child, allows staff to give effective support and challenge. Children are keen and enthusiastic learners. Children make good use of the learning opportunities to grow and develop.

The school has strengthened the support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils' needs are accurately identified. Staff support pupils with SEND in a range of ways. However, for a few pupils with SEND, the support to access the curriculum is not as precise as it should be. For these pupils, it is a struggle to get the best out of their learning.

Pupils enjoy their time in school. They talk about the visits, opportunities and experiences they have. Residential trips are a firm favourite. Older pupils still hold vivid memories of clambering through caves and being proud of making it to the end.

The school has effective systems in place to support all staff, including the many new staff that have started this academic year. There are positive partnerships between pupils and staff that encourage pupils to want to do their best. Staff are clear on their safeguarding responsibilities. They value the support they receive to teach the curriculum.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- In a few subjects, the school has not ensured that resources used to support pupils' learning are sufficiently well linked to the intended curriculum. As a result, pupils are not helped to build and deepen their learning. The school needs to ensure that resources linked to subjects are used effectively to extend and challenge pupils' learning.

- Learning activities for a few pupils with SEND are not well matched to their needs. Pupils remain working on the same tasks for longer than is necessary. Smaller steps are not put in place to help these pupils be as successful as they could be. The school should ensure that staff develop the skills and knowledge to break down the broad aims of learning into smaller, achievable steps that pave the way for pupils' increased success.
- Pupils' work, across subjects, contains errors in basic skills, including in mathematics, punctuation and spelling. These are not consistently addressed by staff. Pupils repeat the same mistakes over time, which hinders them from achieving as well as they should. The school needs to make sure that all staff consistently identify and promptly address pupils' errors and misconceptions.

## 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' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	142422
<b>Local authority</b>	Staffordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10267906
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	112
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Clive O'Donnell
<b>Headteacher</b>	Alison De Ste Croix
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.colwich.staffs.sch.uk">www.colwich.staffs.sch.uk</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- The school joined the Mid-Trent Multi Academy Trust in February 2016.
- The school does not make use of alternative provision.

## Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, curriculum leaders and the special educational needs coordinator.
- The lead inspector spoke with a member of the local academy council, and the chief executive officer and the chair of the board of trustees.

- During the inspection, the inspectors carried out deep dives into these subjects: early reading, mathematics, history and art and design. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors also discussed the curriculum in some other subjects.
- The lead inspector listened to pupils read to a familiar adult.
- The inspectors observed pupils' behaviour during lessons, around the school and at lunchtime. Inspectors also spoke to pupils about behaviour.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- The inspectors considered responses to Ofsted Parent View, including free-text responses. They also considered the online pupil survey and staff survey.
- An inspector talked to parents and carers at the school gate.

### **Inspection team**

Kirsty Foulkes, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Paul Newby

Ofsted Inspector

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