

Inspection of Castle Primary School

Castle Primary School, Newlands Road, Keynsham, Bristol BS31 2TS

Inspection dates: 3 and 4 October 2023

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

The headteacher of this school is Chris Cannings. This school is part of The Partnership Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Emily Massey, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Belinda Deery.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils flourish at this inclusive and welcoming school. The school's motto of 'value learning, value others and value ourselves' is at the heart of everything the school does.

There is a culture of high expectations for all. Pupils set exceptional examples to others. They are polite to adults and their peers. Pupils behave impeccably at social times and in lessons. Older pupils provide strong role models for others. Pupils follow the school rules consistently. Consequently, pupils' attitudes are exemplary. They are a credit to the school. This is a happy and safe place for pupils to learn.

The school prioritises developing pupils' character. Their personal and academic achievements begin in early years. Children quickly learn the school routines and rules. Pupils can explain why democracy and mutual respect are important. Pupils enjoy a wide range of school clubs such as sports, yoga and chess. They are proud of their responsibilities as school captains, librarians and play leaders.

Parents are exceptionally happy with the school. They welcome the school's caring and nurturing environment.

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

Throughout the school's curriculum there is a sharp focus on developing pupils' language and communication skills. In the early years, well-trained staff support children's early language development. Children listen to a rich variety of rhymes and high-quality stories. The indoor and outdoor provision is thoughtfully planned to support the development of children's vocabulary. Pupils are confident to share their thoughts and ideas.

The school gives reading a high priority. Children in the Reception Year get off to a strong start learning phonics quickly. This continues into key stage 1. Staff's subject knowledge is strong and secure. Staff use assessment well to swiftly spot and offer extra help to pupils who are not keeping up with the pace of the phonics programme. Staff accurately match pupils' reading books to their phonics knowledge. This helps pupils to read with increasing fluency and accuracy. The strong focus on reading continues for older pupils. They read or listen to a rich diet of carefully chosen books. The school introduces them to exciting books and new authors. This inspires pupils to read for pleasure and develop a love of reading.

The school's curriculum is ambitious. It identifies the small steps of knowledge pupils need to learn and by when, starting in the early years. The curriculum includes memorable experiences such as trips and encounters with visitors to the school. Pupils learn well. For example, the mathematics curriculum has been thoughtfully sequenced. Pupils learn mathematical vocabulary from an early age. For instance, they can compare the height of toy animals using language such as 'smaller' and

'taller'. Staff challenge older pupils to apply this knowledge to more complex problems.

However, in a few subjects, the school's curriculum thinking does not always identify clearly the most important knowledge that pupils need to know and remember. This means that pupils do not have the same depth of knowledge and understanding they do in other subjects.

In most subjects, teaching uses assessment well. As a result, pupils get to grips with complex topics confidently. In a few subjects, the school does not consider what assessment is telling them about what pupils know and need to learn next.

The school makes sure pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) receive the right support. Staff understand pupils with the most complex needs well. Pupils with SEND receive high-quality support from the school and external experts. They learn the full curriculum.

The school's management of pupils' behaviour is exceptional. Staff have the highest expectations for pupils' conduct. Children in the early years learn to cooperate with adults and their peers. Pupils take pride in all they do, from helping a friend in need to leading assemblies.

The school creates a wide range of opportunities for pupils' wider development. Pupils know that judging others by background, gender or race is wrong. They have a clear sense of right and wrong. The school is successfully growing a community of responsible and kind young citizens.

Trustees fulfil their statutory duties. Governors and trustees share a detailed understanding of the school's strengths and next steps. Well-developed systems allow them to check the effectiveness of the school's actions. Staff are proud to work at the school. They all agree that the school supports them well.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, the school and trust have not identified the key content they want pupils to know and remember over time. This limits pupils' learning. The school and trust should ensure that the curriculum identifies clearly the knowledge and vocabulary that pupils are expected to know and remember.
- In a few subjects, the curriculum is not implemented as the trust intends. As a result, pupils do not gain the depth of knowledge and understanding of the

important content they need. The trust should ensure that the wider curriculum is implemented effectively, so that pupils' knowledge builds well over time.

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

Unique reference number	146952
Local authority	Bath and North East Somerset Council
Inspection number	10288234
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	328
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Chris Nye
CEO of the trust	Emily Massey
Headteacher	Chris Cannings
Website	www.castle.bathnes.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Castle Primary School converted to become an academy in April 2019. When its predecessor school, Castle Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged as requires improvement overall.
- The school uses one registered alternative provider.

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.

- Inspectors met with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, assistant headteacher, special educational needs coordinator, early years leader, teaching and administrative staff, governors, a trustee and the chief executive officer.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives into these subjects: reading, mathematics, science and physical education. They looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at samples of work.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school site. In addition, they met with pupils informally and formally to hear their views.
- Inspectors also spoke to leaders about music and geography and opportunities for personal development.
- The lead inspector listened to pupils read to an adult.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the 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 positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- The lead inspector considered responses to Ofsted's online survey for parents, Ofsted Parent View. He also took into consideration the responses to the survey for pupils and staff.

Inspection team

Richard Vaughan, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Ken Buxton	Ofsted Inspector
Adam Matthews	Ofsted Inspector

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