

Inspection of Pilton Bluecoat Church of England Academy

Abbey Road, Barnstaple, Devon EX31 1JU

Inspection dates: 8 and 9 November 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
------------------------------	-------------

The quality of education	Good
--------------------------	-------------

Behaviour and attitudes	Good
-------------------------	-------------

Personal development	Good
----------------------	-------------

Leadership and management	Good
---------------------------	-------------

Previous inspection grade	Good
---------------------------	------

The head of school is Mathew Harts. This school is part of Team 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, Ian Thomas, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Paul Ginnings.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy, safe and rightly proud of Pilton Bluecoat Church of England Academy. The school has high expectations for all pupils to succeed. Pupils learn in a nurturing environment where staff help them thrive. Everyone is welcome here. One pupil said, 'This is a place where we are kind and caring to everyone.'

Parents are overwhelmingly supportive and value the many opportunities offered to pupils. The wider development of pupils is a strength of the school. They benefit from a range of opportunities that embed the school motto of, 'life, love and learning to the full.' This helps pupils to be responsible, respectful and active citizens. Pupils gain from a variety of pupil leadership roles. For example, 'ethos ambassadors' promote the school values and praise pupils who follow these well. Pupils are prepared well for life in modern Britain. They have a lived experience of democracy. They know their voice matters. The residential trip to the Houses of Parliament enhances their understanding even further.

Pupils value the pastoral support in place to help them. The school yurt is described by pupils as a safe space to share any worries they may have. Pupils are confident their concerns will be resolved quickly.

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

The school has designed a broad and ambitious curriculum. The development of staff subject knowledge has supported the successful implementation of the curriculum. For example, in physical education (PE), teachers benefit from focused training before teaching the next unit of learning. This supports staff in enhancing their expertise when teaching the curriculum.

In many subjects, assessment is used to identify and support any gaps in pupils' knowledge. For example, in mathematics, 'in the moment' checks are used to spot misconceptions that are subsequently addressed. This helps pupils to build their knowledge well. However, in some other subjects, assessment is not used with enough precision to check what pupils know and remember. As a result, some pupils have unknown gaps in their knowledge. This makes it harder for them to build on what they already know.

A culture of reading is at the heart of the school. High-quality texts have been selected to enable pupils to experience a wide variety of genres and authors. These texts are carefully selected to promote equality. Pupils love reading. They take great pleasure in sharing their favourite books. When pupils begin in Year 3, the school identifies how well pupils can read. A phonics scheme is in place to help pupils who have not yet grasped the basics of reading. However, some pupils do not get all the support they need to develop their reading knowledge securely, including some pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Gaps in the phonics code are not addressed quickly enough. As a result, these pupils find their learning more challenging.

Teachers adapt learning to help pupils with SEND to access the curriculum. However, in a minority of cases, some pupils do not get all the help they need. Learning targets are not precise enough to support pupils to develop their reading, writing and mathematics knowledge. As a result, some pupils make slower progress.

Staff have high expectations of pupils' behaviour across the school. Pupils respond well to these and show positive attitudes to their learning. Pupils' attendance is high because leaders are relentless in their drive to promote this.

The school are ambitious about promoting pupils' wider development. For example, the 'big events' curriculum supports pupils to learn the key values of 'building community, building futures, building learning power, building self-esteem.' This supports pupils' wider knowledge, such as economic understanding. All pupils benefit from aspects such as learning musical instruments and trips to enhance the curriculum. As pupils move up the school, this is enriched further. For example, pupils in Year 5 enjoy reading to pupils at another local school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Assessment is not effective, in some subjects, in identifying what pupils know and remember. As a result, some pupils have unknown gaps in their knowledge. The trust needs to ensure that assessment is effective in identifying what pupils know and remember to help pupils build their knowledge securely.
- Some pupils with SEND do not receive all the support they need, including when learning to read. This is because some learning targets lack precision or do not focus on the most significant areas of academic need. As a result, some pupils do not build their knowledge well enough. The trust must ensure that pupils receive all the support they need to learn the curriculum well.

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	138315
Local authority	Devon
Inspection number	10288187
Type of school	Junior
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	7 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	248
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Paul Ginnings
CEO of trust	Ian Thomas
Headteacher	Mathew Harts (Head of School)
Website	www.piltonbluecoat.devon.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	25 January 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of Team Multi-Academy Trust.
- The school is designated as having a religious character. The school is in the Diocese of Exeter. At the most recent section 48 inspection of the school, carried out in November 2019, the school was judged to be excellent.
- Since the previous inspection, there has been a change to the head of school. The head of school joined in September 2023.
- The school does not use any 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 spoke with school leaders, subject leaders, parents, pupils, governors and representatives of the trust.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, religious education and PE. For each deep dive, the 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. Inspectors also spoke to leaders and pupils about the curriculum in some other subjects.
- 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 and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- The lead inspector listened to pupils read to a trusted adult.
- The inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school site. Additionally, the inspectors spoke to pupils to discuss their views about the school.
- The inspectors considered responses to Ofsted Parent View, Ofsted's online survey for parents. The inspectors considered comments made by parents online during the inspection and met with some parents at the start of the first day. Inspectors also considered responses to Ofsted's online survey for staff. There were no responses to Ofsted's pupil questionnaire.

Inspection team

Esther Best, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Matthew Shirley

Ofsted Inspector

Ian Robinson

Ofsted Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2023