

Inspection of St Barnabas CofE First and Middle School

Stonebow Road, Drakes Broughton, Pershore, Worcestershire WR10 2AW

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
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement

The executive headteacher of this school is Elizabeth Whetham. This school is part of the Diocese of Worcester Multi-academy Trust (MAT), which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Claire Davies, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Alan Soper.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy learning at St Barnabas CofE First and Middle School. They feel happy and safe and know that there is always someone to talk to. Staff know the pupils well and provide high-quality pastoral care. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage in their education.

The school has planned an ambitious curriculum, in which learning builds on what pupils already know. Pupils study a good range of subjects and learn well. Learning moves smoothly from one key stage into the next. Teachers are skilled at adapting work for pupils, including for those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils quickly become fluent and enthusiastic readers.

Adults forge good relationships with pupils. The school is a calm and orderly place. Pupils concentrate and behave well in lessons. They are keen to succeed and work hard. Pupils learn to respect those different from themselves. At social times, they play happily together.

Pupils have a range of opportunities to take up positions of responsibility and to influence how the school runs, for example as worship leaders or in the school parliament. They take part in a variety of after-school clubs, including baking, gardening and sports.

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

The school makes learning to read the top priority. From the early years onwards, pupils follow a phonics programme in which they learn letters and sounds in a logical order. Teachers regularly check how well pupils are learning. Staff are highly skilled and provide effective support for any pupils at risk of falling behind. Books for younger pupils are well matched to their phonics knowledge. Across the school, pupils read widely and often, and quickly become confident readers.

Pupils study the full range of subjects in the national curriculum. Leaders are ambitious for what pupils can achieve and review the curriculum regularly. The school has recently changed the curriculum in a number of foundation subjects to increase pupils' interest and curiosity. Leaders have set out clearly how learning in each subject should build up over time. Teachers in each key stage design activities that prepare children well for what follows. The curriculum in Year 7 gives pupils a strong start to key stage 3. Pupils apply their knowledge of literacy and numeracy well in other subjects.

In some subjects, at the very early stages of learning, the small steps that pupils need to take in their learning are sometimes not defined precisely enough. This limits learning on some occasions.

Teachers have secure knowledge of the subjects they teach. They identify the key vocabulary for pupils to learn and present information clearly. Teachers make

effective checks on pupils' learning and recap it to help them to remember it in the longer term. However, in those subjects where leaders have recently made changes, the school is still establishing the end points that the learning is building towards. Because of this, it is not clear how teachers will use these to measure what pupils have learned, or to help address any misconceptions.

The school accurately identifies the additional needs of pupils with SEND. Staff draw effectively on guidance to ensure that pupils' needs are met. As a result, pupils with SEND are able to make good progress through the full curriculum. Leaders ensure that those pupils who join the school with social, emotional and mental health needs take rapid strides in overcoming them.

From the outset, the school sets high expectations for pupils' behaviour. Staff in the early years establish clear routines. Disruption to learning is rare, in part because pupils are keen to learn and enjoy what they do. Pupils collaborate well when asked to do so. Pupils learn to take responsibility for their own behaviour and move sensibly around the site. Leaders track attendance rigorously, and pupils attend well.

Pupils follow a well-planned programme of personal development that teaches them about healthy relationships and how to keep themselves safe. They also learn about different traditions and cultures, for example, through the range of texts that they study. Pupils come to understand fairness and democracy. They see and reflect in their attitudes how everyone is different and worthy of respect.

With the support of the multi-academy trust, the executive headteacher has led the rapid improvement of the school. This is an inclusive school, with a strong commitment to all its pupils. Staff work effectively with parents, for example, to involve them in their children's reading. Leaders have provided effective support for inexperienced teachers joining the school. Staff are happy and motivated and believe that senior leaders are considerate of their well-being and workload.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- At the very early stages, children's learning is sometimes not broken down into precise steps. As a result, there is a lack of clarity in some subjects about what children should learn and what they have learned previously. The school should make sure that, from the very beginning, the curriculum identifies accurately each step in children's intended learning.
- In some subjects, where changes to the curriculum have been made, teachers are not always clear about what knowledge to assess. Teachers are not able, therefore, to judge how far pupils have understood the things that they have

been taught. The school should set out clearly the intended outcomes against which teachers can assess what pupils have learned and address any misconceptions that may remain.

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	144334
Local authority	Worcestershire
Inspection number	10290635
Type of school	Middle deemed primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	2 to 12
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	199
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Alan Soper
Headteacher	Elizabeth Whetham
Website	www.st-barnabas.dowmat.education
Dates of previous inspection	14 and 15 January 2020, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is a Church of England faith school within the Diocese of Worcester. The religious character of the school was last inspected in October 2022. The next section 48 inspection will take place before October 2030.
- The school is part of the Diocese of Worcester MAT.
- The school provides 12 additional pre-school places for children aged two to four.
- The school runs a breakfast club and an after-school club.
- The school does not make use of 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 this into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the executive headteacher and other leaders. Meetings were also held with curriculum leaders and the trust special educational needs coordinator.
- The chair and another five members of the local governing board met with the lead inspector. The inspector also met with a trustee and the chief executive officer of the MAT.
- The inspectors spoke with pupils at social times, and with groups of pupils more formally.
- 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.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documents, including evaluations and improvement plans and minutes of the local academy board. They also reviewed the school's attendance and behaviour records.
- The inspectors took account of responses to Ofsted Parent View. An inspector met with parents at the start of the second day of the inspection. The inspectors also considered responses to Ofsted's survey for staff and pupils.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, science and geography. For each deep dive, the inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to staff, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of their work.
- The lead inspector listened to a sample of pupils from Years 1, 2 and 3 reading to a familiar adult.

Inspection team

Martin Spoor, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Michelle Bishton

Ofsted Inspector

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