

# Inspection of Chewton Mendip Church of England VA Primary School

High Street, Chewton Mendip, Radstock, Somerset BA3 4LL

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Inspection dates: 5 and 6 December 2023

**Overall effectiveness** **Good**

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The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Early years provision **Good**

Previous inspection grade Good

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

Pupils recognise that Chewton Mendip is a special place to be. Parents and pupils appreciate everything the school does to enrich pupils' lives. For example, the school helps pupils to develop confidence through performances such as the school's nativity and 'Chewton's got talent'. The importance of the school's values of 'Kindness, respect, perseverance, responsibility, honesty and courage' are threaded through the curriculum and valued by the school community.

Pupils benefit from a well-planned curriculum. The school has high expectations of pupils. Most pupils rise to these. However, on occasion, a few pupils can disrupt the learning of others. Although this is so, children in the early years settle quickly into school routines.

Pupils make use of the many leadership opportunities provided to them, such as the pupil voice team and wellbeing champions. These pupils promote wellbeing through assembly discussions. They raise awareness about the ways pupils can look after themselves, for example through 'draw your breath' activities. Pupils say staff listen to them and help them. This helps them feel safe. Pupils enjoy opportunities to work with the local community, such as the 'soup lunch' where they get to recite poetry and sing songs.

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

The new headteacher has maintained a sharp focus on the curriculum. Leaders, together with governors, have ensured the curriculum is carefully sequenced with the knowledge the school wants pupils to learn. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) learn from the same curriculum. These pupils are well supported with bespoke strategies where appropriate. Consequently, pupils progress well through the curriculum.

Some subjects, such as mathematics, are more developed than others. The school has monitored the teaching of the mathematics curriculum and has provided feedback to teachers. This has been acted upon. Because of this, the curriculum is delivered well. Consequently, pupils remember their learning and talk knowledgeably about the content covered. For example, they can explain how to multiply fractions with different denominators. Younger pupils can explain how place value helps them to solve addition and subtraction problems. In a minority of subjects, the monitoring of the curriculum is not as secure. The implementation of the curriculum is not as effective in these subjects. Because of this, pupils find it more difficult to articulate their learning and remember it long term.

Children begin learning how to read as soon as they start school. Staff are trained to teach the phonics programme well. Any pupils who need extra help receive it quickly. This helps pupils to keep up. Staff in the early years pay particularly close attention to the way sounds are pronounced. Pupils increase in confidence in

reading and achieve well. Links with poets and authors help to instil a love of reading.

Phonics is used to help pupils to learn to write the sounds they are reading. Staff provide personalised feedback on letter formation. This means any misconceptions are quickly addressed. Children in the early years can write sentences independently and with the correct punctuation, such as 'The bus is red.'

Most pupils have positive attitudes to learning. Children in the early years use manners without prompting. Pupils are proud of their achievements. However, sometimes, low-level disruption can occur. This is not always dealt with swiftly enough. Consequently, learning can be disturbed. Although persistent absence for some groups of pupils is high, leaders analyse the root causes for absence and support families to find solutions.

Clubs such as art and coding nurture pupils' talents and interests well. Cross country and hockey competitions help to encourage teamwork. Pupils articulately discuss the differences that exist between people. They have a clear understanding of equality. Pupils know about the world beyond Chewton Mendip through their learning of other cultures and countries, such as Ghana and France.

Governors have taken steps to develop their effectiveness since the previous inspection. They now have an improved understanding of the curriculum and how well it is being taught. Governors offer support and challenge to leaders. External advice has been sought by leaders and governors to further develop the curriculum.

The way in which leaders have engaged with the community during this period of change is a strength of this school. Parents appreciate leaders' active engagement with them, for example, through coffee mornings. They recognise that these changes have resulted in their children benefiting from a broad and balanced education at Chewton Mendip.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

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

- On occasion, low level disruption is not addressed. This means the learning of other pupils is disturbed. The school should ensure that learning is allowed to continue without this disruption.
- There is not sufficient oversight of the teaching of a few subjects. Some pupils do not learn as well as they do in other subjects. The school needs to check how well the teaching of the curriculum is enabling pupils to learn the knowledge they need to know.

## 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>	123827
<b>Local authority</b>	Somerset
<b>Inspection number</b>	10288160
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	106
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Claire Bloor
<b>Headteacher</b>	Clare Duggan
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.chewtonmendipschool.org.uk">www.chewtonmendipschool.org.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	18 October 2022, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- There has been a change in headteacher since the previous inspection. The headteacher was appointed in January 2023.
- The school is a voluntary-controlled Church of England school which is part of the Diocese of Bath and Wells. The previous section 48 inspection took place in February 2019, where the school was judged to require improvement.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- There is an after-school club for pupils who attend the school.

## 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.

- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, school staff, parents, pupils and governors.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and art. 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.
- The lead inspector listened to pupils from Years 1, 2 and 3 read to a known 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 and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school, including at lunchtime and breaktimes. In addition, the inspectors met with pupils formally and informally to hear their views.
- Inspectors considered responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, including free-text responses. They also looked at responses to the pupil survey and responses to the staff survey.

## **Inspection team**

Lakmini Harkus, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Victoria Griffin

His Majesty's Inspector

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