

Inspection of Christ Church CofE Primary School

Malvern Road, Cheltenham, Gloucestershire GL50 2NR

Inspection dates: 6 and 7 December 2023

Overall effectiveness

Outstanding

The quality of education

Outstanding

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Outstanding

Early years provision

Outstanding

Previous inspection grade

Not previously inspected under section 5
of the Education Act 2005

The headteacher of this school is Kerry Pope. This school is part of the Diocese of Gloucester Academies Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Rachel Howie, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Tim Brock.

Ofsted has not previously inspected Christ Church CofE Primary School under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. However, Ofsted previously judged Christ Church CofE Primary School to be outstanding, before it opened as an academy.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils love to attend this school, and rightly so. They receive an excellent start to their education. This is because staff have the highest ambition for every pupil to become 'the very best they can be'. Pupils leave the school highly equipped for the challenges of secondary education.

Pupils' behaviour is impeccable. Staff expect them to work hard, and pupils do not disappoint. They listen attentively and are keen to learn. Pupils are passionately opposed to any form of discrimination. They know why it is important to challenge banter and prejudice.

One of the school's many strengths is how it empowers pupils to be effective advocates for themselves and others. Pupils fundraise for charities, organise clubs and embody the school's motto, 'always be kind'. Staff show genuine care and compassion towards pupils. This makes for a harmonious and safe place in which to learn.

The school meticulously plans purposeful experiences far beyond the academic. This helps pupils to develop their character and confidence. These include organ recitals, literature festivals and inspirational visitors to speak to pupils. The school ensures that disadvantaged pupils never miss out. All of this work contributes to an inclusive and aspirational approach for all.

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

The headteacher is unwavering in her pursuit of excellence. The trust, staff and governors share in the vision and direction of the school. They leave no stone unturned in finding ways to refine the already excellent provision.

The school has cultivated a love of reading. It is the bedrock of the curriculum. Staff have thoughtfully chosen books to build pupils' vocabulary and spark curiosity. In lessons, pupils eagerly discuss and debate the use of language by authors. Reading ambassadors actively instil a love of reading through their book recommendations. By the end of Year 6, pupils are confident readers and achieve highly.

The early reading curriculum is equally effective. In the early years, well-trained staff focus sharply on developing children's communication and language. They play alongside children, extend their vocabulary and introduce new words at every opportunity. In key stage 1, pupils secure the phonics knowledge they need to be successful readers. If they fall behind, staff act quickly to give them extra help.

The school has embedded a knowledge-rich curriculum across all subjects. It defines essential concepts and vocabulary pupils need to learn. Teachers make sure that pupils revisit prior content before they move on to something more challenging. This means that pupils build new learning on firm foundations. For example, in physical education, pupils apply their movement skills to learn defending techniques in netball.

Similarly, in mathematics, pupils confidently use their knowledge of fractions to solve complex problems. Regular checks mean that teachers know when pupils are ready to move on and when they need extra practice. Over time, pupils build an impressive body of knowledge across various subjects.

The school is ambitious for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), including those in the specialist Communication and Interaction Centre (CIC). The school does all it can to identify and meet pupils' needs early. Staff are highly trained and knowledgeable. This shows in the way they carefully adapt activities and guide pupils to learn the same curriculum as their peers. Pupils in the CIC integrate seamlessly into mainstream lessons, social times and whole-school events. This is because there is a strong culture of inclusion. Pupils with SEND achieve exceptionally well from their starting points.

The school has the highest expectations of pupils' behaviour and attendance. Leaders model the standards they expect from pupils. In turn, pupils strive to meet these standards. They are polite, courteous and considerate to each other, staff and visitors. Routines for excellent behaviour start early and continue as pupils move up the school. Pupils attend very well.

The school's work to broaden pupils' talents and interests is noteworthy. For example, pupils try new sports, grow vegetables and perform at many concerts. Pupils' service to the wider community is commendable. By contributing to projects, such as fundraising for toilets in Africa, they make a tangible difference to the lives of others. Pupils visit a mandir, mosque and synagogue to develop an understanding of cultures and faiths. They talk confidently about how the law protects people with different characteristics. The school ensures that pupils grow into active and responsible youngsters who bring fundamental British values to life.

Parents are typically fulsome in their praise for the school. Many commented on the dedicated staff, family feel and high-quality pastoral care at Christ Church.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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	138940
Local authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	10256649
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	219
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
CEO of the trust	Rachel Howie
Chair of trust	Tim Brock
Headteacher	Kerry Pope
Website	www.christchurchschool-chelt.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school converted to become a single-academy trust in November 2012. It joined the Diocese of Gloucester Academies Trust, a multi-academy trust of primary schools in Gloucestershire, in June 2022.
- Changes in leadership have occurred since the previous inspection. The headteacher took up post in May 2020.
- The school is part of the Diocese of Gloucester. It received a section 48 inspection for schools of a religious character in January 2020, where it was found to be good.
- The school has a CIC specialist resource base with 10 places for pupils with communication and interaction needs.
- 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.
- Inspectors held discussions with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, the deputy chief executive officer, trustees and members of the local governing board.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics, physical education and art. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with the school, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also met with curriculum leaders and looked more widely at pupils' work in personal, social and health education, history, modern foreign languages and writing.
- The lead inspector listened to pupils in Years 1, 2 and 3 read to an adult.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the lead inspector: met with the designated safeguarding lead; checked the single central record of adults working in the school; took account of the views of 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 during breaktime and lunchtime. They spoke with pupils and staff about behaviour.
- Inspectors spoke with a range of staff to discuss how the school supports their workload and well-being.
- Inspectors spoke to parents at the start and end of the school day. They considered responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View, including free-text comments. They also considered responses to Ofsted's staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Dale Burr, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Lorna Buchanan

Ofsted Inspector

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