

Inspection of Church Eaton Primary School

High Street, Church Eaton, Stafford, Staffordshire ST20 0AG

Inspection dates: 19 and 20 March 2024

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

The headteacher of this school is David Baker. This school is part of Staffordshire Universities 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, Dr James Capper, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Mary Walker.

What is it like to attend this school?

When you walk into Church Eaton Primary School there is a real community feeling. Pupils are friendly, cheerful and well mannered. They are proud to attend their school. Pupils appreciate the support they get from the staff. They feel safe and know that they can share any concerns they may have with any adult in school. Staff look after and care for pupils well.

The new headteacher is making necessary improvements to the school. There is now high ambition for the pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). However, some pupils do not achieve as well as they should. This is because there are weaknesses in the delivery of the curriculum. Pupils have gaps in their knowledge as a result.

Pupils show respectful behaviour. They know the school's rules and apply them well. They are respectful to staff and each other. Pupils play cooperatively on the playground. They know what bullying is, and if it happens, they report it and say adults deal with it swiftly. Pupils are rarely absent.

Pupils enjoy a range of experiences, including trips partly funded by a local charity. All pupils, including the youngest, are members of 'Solution Circles'. They work together with staff to make improvements to the school.

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

The school and the trust have recently made positive alterations to the curriculum. Some subjects, including computing, are delivered well. However, there is still more work to do in other subjects. In a number of subjects, such as mathematics, the curriculum is not yet fully developed or implemented. Consequently, there are gaps in the pupils' knowledge. Furthermore, the school does not ensure that some pupils fully develop their vocabulary over time. When this happens, they struggle to talk about their learning and deepen their understanding.

The school has successfully cultivated a love of reading by introducing pupils to a range of suitable texts. Reading has a high priority at this school. Staff are well trained to deliver the phonics programme consistently well. The books that pupils read are carefully matched to their phonics knowledge. Skilled staff regularly check on what pupils know and remember. They support pupils who struggle to read to catch up quickly.

There is a sharp focus on reading for older pupils. Every day, pupils spend time on their reading skills. They complete activities using challenging texts. These activities develop pupils' comprehension skills well. Initiatives such as the library bus, reading buddies and the 'reading army of volunteers' promote a love of reading and reading fluency.

In the early years, children thrive in a language-rich environment. Children enjoy learning new things every day, and the staff give them lots of meaningful opportunities to do so such as tasks around the programming of robots or creating buildings from drinking straws. Staff know the children well and plan activities that build on what they already know. Many parents report that their children enjoy coming to school and that parents are happy with how the school maintains strong links with them.

The school identifies pupils' additional needs quickly and accurately, starting in the early years. Pupils with SEND receive the support they need to get the most from their learning. Disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND follow the same curriculum as their peers.

Pupils benefit from a personal development programme that is woven throughout the curriculum. Through assemblies, trips and enrichment days, pupils learn about the wider world and diversity. Pupils make a tangible contribution to the life of the school. They work with staff and look very closely at where improvements can be made. Pupils take on roles such as actioners, digital leaders and curriculum and library leaders. They have transformed the library to make it more accessible and engaging. Pupils run the weekly 'Digital Newsletter' and share events with parents. They have raised money for the forest area in school. The school offers pupils a wide range of clubs, which they attend well. These include multi-sports, arts and crafts, drama, filmmaker, board games, embroidery and gardening.

Among the staff, there is a strong team spirit across school. There is a real commitment from all staff to making a positive difference to the lives of pupils.

Governors and trustees have a secure knowledge of how to support and challenge the school. Staff appreciate the school's efforts to support them with workload and well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a number of subjects, the curriculum is not fully developed or implemented as intended. Consequently, pupils are not supported well enough to build their subject knowledge and vocabulary over time. The school and the trust should ensure that the curriculum in all subjects is well designed and implemented so that pupils learn more and remember more.
- The curriculum for teaching mathematics has been revised. However, there is not enough detail of what pupils are expected to know and remember. As a result, there are gaps in pupils' knowledge, especially of number facts. The school should

make sure that pupils get enough opportunities to develop and apply their knowledge of number bonds, times tables and mathematical fluency.

- The school does not ensure that pupils build subject-specific vocabulary over time. This means pupils struggle to talk about their learning in detail. The school should focus on securing pupils' vocabulary to enable them to deepen their understanding.

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	147425
Local authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	10294675
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	78
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Mary Walker
CEO of the trust	Dr James Capper
Headteacher	David Baker
Website	www.churcheaton.staffs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school is part of Staffordshire University Academies Trust which contains 20 schools.
- No pupils attend 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 met with the headteacher, the chief executive officer, the deputy chief executive and the special needs coordinator. They also met with groups of staff

and pupils.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics and computing. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, 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 a sample of pupils read to a familiar adult.
- Inspectors spoke to leaders about pupils' behaviour, attendance and policies and procedures. Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around school. An inspector discussed the school's analysis of attendance with leaders.
- Inspectors reviewed information about other areas of learning and the wider curriculum.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documents, including leaders' evaluation of the school and priorities for improvement.
- The lead inspector met with those responsible for governance, including the vice-chairs of the local academy council and a trustee.
- 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 views of pupils, parents and staff were considered through discussions and looking at information collected from Ofsted's online surveys.

Inspection team

Lynda Townsend, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

John Rowe

Ofsted Inspector

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