

Inspection of a good school: St Peter's CofE Primary School

Church Lane, Hixon, Stafford, Staffordshire ST18 0PS

Inspection dates:

16 and 17 April 2024

Outcome

St Peter's CofE Primary School continues to be a good school.

The headteacher of this school is Charlotte Pilkington. This school is part of Mid-Trent 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, Paul Hayward, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Clive O'Donnell.

What is it like to attend this school?

St Peter's CofE Primary school is a successful, well-led school where pupils and staff flourish. In the words of one of the parents, 'St Peter's is a caring and nurturing learning environment where every pupil matters.'

Pupils are happy and enjoy coming to school. Staff know the pupils exceptionally well. Nurturing relationships, alongside high expectations, ensure that all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), achieve well.

Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. They live up to the high expectations that staff have for them. Pupils feel that school is safe and free from bullying. Pupils agree that there is always someone to look after them.

The extra-curricular activities on offer are impressive and are evidence that staff believe in 'opening doors with learning, faith and care'. Pupils can take part in cricket, gardening, musical theatre and many more clubs. Pupils also have the opportunity to participate in social action projects, which enable them to work collaboratively, creating thoughtful solutions to local or national issues.

Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the school. One parent summed up the views of many when they said, 'I am proud that my children are part of this school.'

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

The school has a clear and ambitious vision. Everyone involved with the school works hard to ensure that every pupil's experience is positive and successful and takes into account their individual needs. As a result, pupils are prepared well for their next steps.

The school has developed a rich and varied curriculum, identifying the key knowledge and skills pupils should learn from early years to Year 6. Teachers have a good understanding of the subjects they teach. This is especially evident in reading and mathematics, where teachers take the time to carefully unpick misconceptions to ensure that pupils' understanding is secure. This ensures that pupils know the things they need to before completing tasks.

Reading is a strength across the school. Staff are ambitious for all pupils to love reading, so they set high expectations right from the start. Early reading is taught well. The school makes sure that staff are experts through frequent training and coaching. Teachers know when pupils need extra help to keep up. They provide support quickly. As a result, pupils achieve well in their reading. Beyond the phonics programme, pupils can access a wide selection of interesting books. In the pre-school, staff have identified the top 10 books to read before starting school and parents can borrow these to share with their children at home. This helps to prepare children well for Reception.

Pupils behave well in this school. They are eager to learn new things and listen with interest during lessons, supporting each other well in their learning. They talk proudly with visitors about their work. Staff have consistent expectations of behaviour, both in the classroom and beyond. As a result, poor behaviour is infrequent and low-level disruption is rare.

Teachers use assessment well to carefully check what pupils know and remember. They then use this information to identify pupils who need extra help or have gaps in their learning. Pupils catch up quickly using the interventions put in place.

Pupils with SEND achieve well. Pupils' needs are accurately identified and well supported in a range of ways. Where appropriate, pupils get extra help. A few pupils with SEND have challenges in regulating their behaviour. Staff skilfully support these pupils so that they are able to achieve well.

Pupils benefit from a wide range of opportunities that enrich the curriculum. These promote pupils' confidence and sense of responsibility. Pupils can take on responsibilities such as reading buddies, digital leaders or librarians. Pupils' understanding of the school's Christian values is particularly strong. They can clearly articulate the core values of perseverance, thankfulness, respect, friendship, compassion and courage. However, pupils' understanding of some fundamental British values is less well developed.

Local academy committee members and trustees have high expectations of school leaders. They have a firm understanding of the school's work because they ensure that they are very well informed about the impact of improvement actions, asking the right questions and providing an appropriate level of challenge. The school has a team of

dedicated and committed staff members. They are proud to be part of the St Peter's family and work together well in the best interests of all pupils. Staff know that leaders consider their workload and do not add to it unnecessarily. Leaders are highly regarded by staff in school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school has not clearly defined the specific knowledge they want pupils to know about some aspects of British values, such as the rule of law and individual liberty. This means that pupils' understanding of some British values is not as strong as it could be. Leaders should ensure that they make clear the important knowledge they want pupils to learn about all aspects of British values.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in January 2019.

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	142447
Local authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	10322881
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	241
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Clive O'Donnell
Headteacher	Charlotte Pilkington
Website	www.st-peters-hixon.staffs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	18 December 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school joined the Mid-Trent Multi Academy Trust in February 2016.
- The school uses one registered alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- 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. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector held meetings with the headteacher and other leaders.
- The inspector met with representatives of the governing body and the trust.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in reading, mathematics and physical education. For each deep dive, the inspector 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 inspector observed pupils reading to a familiar adult.
- The inspector scrutinised a wide range of documents, including those related to behaviour and attendance. The inspector also reviewed the school's evaluation of its own performance and the school's development plans.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector 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 inspector held informal and formal discussions with pupils and observed lunchtime.
- The inspector reviewed responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View, including additional free-text comments. They also took account of responses to Ofsted's online staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Emma Gater, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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