

# Inspection of a good school: Bilston Church of England Primary School

Albany Crescent, Bilston, West Midlands WV14 0HU

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Inspection dates:

16 and 17 July 2024

## **Outcome**

Bilston Church of England Primary School continues to be a good school.

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

Pupils' well-being and care are at the heart of Bilston Church of England Primary. Leaders have created a truly inclusive school. They have high ambitions for every pupil and want them to be the best they can be. Leaders place great emphasis on helping pupils overcome many barriers, including those for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The school supports pupils who speak English as an additional language and have learning gaps or levels below expectations for their age effectively, enabling them to flourish.

Pupils work hard and aim to do well. Lessons are calm and orderly. Pupils have every confidence in their teachers to sort out any issues that might occur. They have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe in a variety of situations, including online. Pupils are curious, welcoming and friendly, displaying a genuine enjoyment for learning and school. Warm and respectful relationships between teachers and pupils are commonplace.

Pupils benefit from an extensive range of activities that develop their personal interests. The many activities include trips, visits, residential and after-school clubs. For example, pupils speak with passion about their recent trip to the beach. The school's values underpin everything that happens here.

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

The school has high aspirations for all pupils. These aspirations are driven through a well-designed and sequenced curriculum. The curriculum has been developed with an understanding of the school's context. For example, many children join the school partway through a school year or with much lower levels of development than is typical for their age. This means that pupils have many barriers to learning such as speech and communication delays. Leaders know this and have employed their own speech and

language specialist to support children. As a result, pupils are well supported and quickly catch up.

In most subjects, the curriculum clearly identifies the precise knowledge and skills pupils should learn. This helps teachers to teach the right things at the right time and is especially effective in core subjects. However, in some foundation subjects, the curriculum is not as clear. Where this is the case, the key knowledge and skills pupils should know are not always clear to staff.

Teachers have strong subject knowledge. They generally use assessment well and adapt their teaching to meet pupils' needs. At times, however, the support given is not as effective as it could be. For example, some pupils are left waiting for their learning to move on when they are ready to learn new things. While others do not always receive effective support when they are stuck. This slows pupils' learning.

Support for pupils with SEND is effective. Staff get to know children and their families very well. They understand existing barriers and work effectively to provide the help the child and family needs. Leaders share clear information about pupils with staff so that they know how best to support them. Interventions are swift and effective. As a result, pupils with SEND do well.

Leaders have prioritised reading. The teaching of phonics is effective in ensuring pupils become fluent readers. Anyone falling behind receives targeted interventions. Pupils enjoy daily story time and their class novels. The library has many interesting and exciting texts which pupils enjoy choosing from.

Reception children settle well into school. Adults quickly teach them the routines of school life. Children enjoy learning and playing in classrooms and the well-equipped outside spaces. They learn about the links between letters and sounds as soon as they arrive. Relationships are warm and supportive. Children are well prepared for their next steps.

The school has carefully considered its offer to promote wider opportunities. A detailed provision map ensures that all pupils have opportunities to extend their learning beyond the classroom. These include trips, visits and residential, as well as popular after-school clubs. Pupils are encouraged to find their passions and talents, for example through funded instrumental lessons or taking on leadership roles as peer supports or worship leaders. In lessons, pupils learn about healthy relationships and core values such as respect, kindness and equality. Pupils are knowledgeable about these and well prepared for life in modern Britain.

Leaders, including governors, know their school well. They work together to drive up standards. All have a clear understanding of what works and what needs to improve. Senior leaders regularly review their own practices and seek outside reviews and support. Leaders work effectively to address shortcomings they spot. Staff are proud to work at the school. They believe that leaders care about their well-being and make decisions with staff's workload in mind.

## Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

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

- The curriculum in some foundation subjects does not clearly identify the precise knowledge and skills pupils should learn. This means that staff are not always clear about what to teach in what order. The school should ensure that the curriculum in all subjects clearly identifies what key knowledge pupils should know.
- Not all staff consistently adapt their teaching to support pupils effectively. Some staff intervene too quickly, not providing ample thinking time, or doing the work for pupils. At other times, pupils who are ready to learn new things are kept waiting. This slows pupils' learning. The school should ensure that all staff have the expertise to effectively support pupils' learning.

## 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 June 2015.

## 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>	130305
<b>Local authority</b>	Wolverhampton
<b>Inspection number</b>	10343912
<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>	465
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Mark Bircher
<b>Headteacher</b>	Gary Gentle
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.bilstoncofeprimary.co.uk">www.bilstoncofeprimary.co.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	11 June 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school is a larger-than-average-size Church of England primary school.
- The school runs daily morning and afternoon childcare provisions for its pupils.
- The school does not use any alternative provision for its pupils.

## 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 met with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher and other leaders. The inspector held a meeting with the governing body, including the chair of governors. The inspector met with a representative from the local authority. Meetings were held with curriculum leaders, teachers and support staff.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics and music. For each deep dive, the inspector discussed the curriculum with subject leaders,

visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The inspector visited the early years for each of the deep dives. The inspector considered the curriculum offer in other subjects.

- The inspector listened to pupils read to a familiar adult.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour and interactions during lessons and at breaktimes and lunchtimes and spoke to many pupils during the inspection.
- 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 considered responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View. This included free-text comments. The inspector spoke to parents at the school gate. The inspector also reviewed responses to Ofsted's online staff survey and responses to Ofsted's pupil survey.

### **Inspection team**

Bianka Zemke, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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