

Inspection of Curry Mallet Church of England Primary School

Lower Street, Curry Mallet, Taunton, Somerset TA3 6TA

Inspection dates:	8 and 9 October 2024
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Outstanding

Until November 2020, the school was exempt from routine inspection because it was judged as outstanding for overall effectiveness at its previous inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. The school has not been inspected under section 5 of the Act since March 2014. Since September 2024, schools have not been awarded an overall effectiveness grade.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils feel safe and happy at this school. Adults care for them well. This starts in the early years. Staff establish routines from the very beginning. Children, including two-year-olds in the pre-school, quickly feel comfortable in their new surroundings. Pupils behave well in lessons.

The school has high expectations for its pupils. This includes those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils rise to these expectations. By the time pupils leave key stage 2, they achieve well in national tests. They are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

The school has a well-considered personal development programme. The school's Christian ethos underpins much of this work. Visitors to assemblies discuss moral issues with pupils. This helps pupils to become caring and compassionate citizens. They raise money for good causes. For example, pupils helped to raise money for a bike shelter.

Pupils' knowledge of the curriculum is enhanced through a range of trips. This includes visits to museums and art galleries. Pupils pursue their talents and interests through opportunities such as art and nature clubs.

The school has recently improved how it communicates with parents and carers. This has helped families to feel more connected to the school's work.

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

The school is coming out of a period of transition. There have been several changes in key roles recently. The governing body has also taken the difficult decision to reduce the opening hours of the pre-school. Nevertheless, the determined and knowledgeable staff team has ensured that pupils' education has not suffered. They have remained focused on pupils' learning. The supportive culture within the school means that staff morale is high. Despite the turbulence, the school has made staff well-being and reducing workload a priority.

The school has a detailed and ambitious curriculum from the Reception Year upwards. This ensures that teachers know precisely what pupils should learn and when. The curriculum carefully considers the mixed-age classes. Pupils learn new content in a logical order. However, the pre-school curriculum has not kept pace with the changes to its provision. In a few areas, the curriculum does not detail well enough what children should be able to know and do. Staff are not clear on how learning develops. This means children do not build upon their prior learning well enough.

Through ongoing training, teachers implement the curriculum well. They explain new concepts clearly. Teachers encourage pupils to know and use key vocabulary to explain their thinking. They provide work that closely matches the high ambition of the curriculum. As a result, pupils typically learn well across most subjects. This includes pupils with the most complex needs. The school has a much higher proportion of pupils

with education, health and care plans than most schools. It is rightly proud of how it supports these pupils. Skilled staff make adaptations to help these pupils to thrive.

In a few subjects, the school has not established systems for checking if pupils have built knowledge in the long term. This means that staff do not know when pupils have gaps in their knowledge, which then go unaddressed. As a result, some pupils do not build on prior learning securely, nor develop the depth of knowledge that the curriculum intends.

The school prioritises reading from the very start. In the early years, staff share a range of books which children enjoy listening to. This promotes a love of reading. The school has trained its staff well in phonics. They have strong subject knowledge. Adults help pupils who fall behind to catch up quickly. Pupils read books that are matched to the sounds they know. This helps them to become confident, fluent readers. In key stage 2, pupils learn to comprehend increasingly complex texts.

Older pupils mix well with their younger peers at playtimes. Disruption to learning is rare. Pupils have positive attitudes to school. 'Well-being buddies' help those who need some emotional support.

The school has a strong focus on promoting how people can be different. As a result, pupils speak knowledgeably about discrimination. Pupils know how to stay safe online. They know how to report anything that concerns them.

The governing body provides effective support and challenge to the school. For example, they closely scrutinise any trends in pupils' attendance. Governors regularly make their own checks on the school's work. This helps them to have a secure knowledge of the school's strengths and any areas for development. The governing body has helped to manage a smooth transition at a time of substantial change.

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 the early years does not account for recent changes to the pre-school provision. As a result, staff are not clear enough about how learning connects with children's prior knowledge. This means that children do not build on their prior learning well enough. The school should ensure that all parts of the pre-school curriculum are well considered so that children build well on their prior knowledge and are fully prepared for the start of the Reception Year.
- The school has not fully established systems of checking how successfully pupils remember the key knowledge in some subjects. Consequently, staff are not able to address gaps in knowledge. Pupils' recall of some prior learning is not secure. The

school should ensure that there are effective systems of checking how well pupils are learning and that this information is used to ensure that any gaps in knowledge are addressed.

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	123751
Local authority	Somerset
Inspection number	10344540
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	68
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Benjamyn Toms
Headteacher	Katie Hill
Website	www.currymalletschool.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	12 and 13 March 2014, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Information about this school

- The headteacher, special educational needs coordinator and pre-school manager all took up their posts shortly before the inspection.
- The school opened a pre-school in 2017. This admits children from two years old. In September 2024, the pre-school reduced its opening from five days a week to two-and-a-half days a week.
- The school runs its own breakfast and after-school provision.
- This is an Anglican school in the Diocese of Bath and Wells. The most recent section 48 inspection for schools of a religious character took place in June 2019. The school's next section 48 inspection will be within eight school years of this date.
- The school uses one registered alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and

management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth form provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024 will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation 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, groups of staff, groups of pupils and members of the local governing body. An inspector also held a telephone call with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics and art and design. 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.
- Inspectors also looked at samples of work and spoke to pupils about their learning in other curriculum areas.
- Inspectors observed pupils’ behaviour in lessons and around the school site.
- 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.
- An inspector spoke to some parents at the start of the school day. Inspectors also considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments, and Ofsted’s surveys for pupils and staff.

Inspection team

Jason Edge, lead inspector

His Majesty’s Inspector

Jo Briscoombe

Ofsted Inspector

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