

Inspection of Bishop Lonsdale Church of England Primary Academy

Shaws Lane, Eccleshall, Stafford, Staffordshire ST21 6AU

Inspection dates:	12 and 13 November 2024
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Good

The principal of this school is Claire Jones. This school is part of the St Chad's 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 (CEO), Sarah Cockshott, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Anthony Orlik.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils love to learn and flourish at this school. The school sits at the heart of its community. There are strong links with the local church and charities. The school's values of love, friendship, compassion, courage and justice permeate the school. Pupils talk passionately about these values and how they help them in school and life. Parents and carers are extremely positive about the school and describe it as a 'lifesaver'.

The school has high expectations of all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils rise to these. Pupils have a zest to learn. They are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Behaviour is exemplary throughout the school. Pupils are exceptionally well mannered and courteous to adults and to one another. They know how important it is to treat everyone in the same way. They know that they can rely on staff to help them sort out any issues which may arise.

Pupils make a valuable contribution to the school through their leadership responsibilities. The junior leadership team, signing mentors and digital leaders support the school well. Pupils say: 'We are developed to stand up and have a voice.'

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

The school has successfully developed an ambitious and well-organised curriculum. In the majority of subjects, the curriculum sets out clearly what pupils will learn across each year group. In a small number of other subjects this is less clear. This means that teachers are not sure what knowledge they should teach and emphasise in these subjects. At times, this results in pupils not securing new knowledge as well as they could.

Teachers deliver the curriculum consistently. They explain new learning clearly and make sure that pupils have access to suitable resources. Teachers spot pupils' misconceptions quickly and address them. The needs of pupils with SEND are particularly well catered for. Their specific needs are quickly identified. Teachers ensure that pupils with SEND learn well alongside their peers.

Pupils have plenty of opportunities to practise and revise what they have learned. For example, teachers plan for pupils to revisit what they have learned 'last lesson, this term and last year'. This helps pupils remember much of their previous learning.

The school's approach to reading is carefully structured and successful. Staff are well trained to introduce sounds and letters. Children in Nursery learn about sounds and how these make words. In Reception and key stage 1 pupils learn sounds in a logical order. They use their phonics knowledge to read new and unfamiliar words accurately. Pupils read from books that contain the sounds that they already know. All pupils enjoy being regularly read to, particularly in other subjects, such as reading about the Great Fire of London in history.

Children in the early years settle into school quickly. Staff make sure that they understand routines and can independently access resources which support their learning. Children practise what has previously been taught. For example, children learn to make repeating patterns with the teacher. They then practise making these in the sand tray throughout the week. This reinforces children's understanding of patterns and improves their fine motor skills.

The school ensures that attendance is a high priority for everyone. Pupils rarely miss out on their schooling and have high rates of attendance. This is because pupils love coming to school. They focus well in lessons and play very positively with their friends at playtime.

The school caters well for the personal development of its pupils. It makes good use of visits, events and experiences to bring the curriculum to life. For example, pupils' learning of practical skills in forest school helps them understand about living in the Stone Age. Pupils have access to extra-curricular clubs from which they generally benefit. The school is developing these further. Pupils enjoy the residential visits that the school arranges for them. They have a secure knowledge of how to look after their physical and mental well-being and develop an understanding of fundamental British values. They are well prepared for life in modern Britain.

The local academy committee is passionate about the school and wants it to continue to thrive as it grows. The committee recognises the school's many strengths and supports the school well where it is seeking to improve. The trust fulfils its role by having its 'finger on the pulse' of the school.

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 minority of subjects, the curriculum is not always organised as well as it could be. It does not always build in a methodical way across year groups. Pupils could learn more than they do in these subjects. The school should ensure that all curriculum subjects are planned logically to ensure pupils' learning is built upon effectively.

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	143351
Local authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	10344103
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	271
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Anthony Orlik
CEO of the trust	Sarah Cockshott
Principal	Claire Jones
Website	www.lonsdale.staffs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	26 June 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- The school operates a breakfast and after-school club before school.
- The school is part of the St Chad's Academies Trust, which consists of 19 schools.
- The school is within the Diocese of Lichfield. Its latest section 48 inspection was in July 2023. The school's next section 48 inspection will take place within five years of the previous inspection.

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.
- During the inspection, the lead inspector held meetings with the principal. He met three members of the local academy committee, including the chair of the committee. He also met with one trustee. He met the CEO and a school improvement partner of the trust. He held a telephone conversation with a representative of the diocese.
- 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 inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics, English, history and computing. They met with subject leaders, visited lessons, spoke with teachers and pupils and viewed examples of pupils' work. An inspector also spoke to subject leaders in art and design, geography and languages.
- An inspector observed pupils in key stages 1 and 2 read to a trusted adult.
- The inspectors spoke with members of staff about their workload and well-being.
- The inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around school.
- The inspectors considered the responses, including the free-text comments, to Ofsted Parent View. They also considered the responses to the staff survey. Inspectors spoke to parents and carers at the start and end of the school day.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documentation provided by the school. This included the school's improvement priorities, school policies, curriculum documents, SEND records, behaviour records, attendance records and minutes of meetings held by the trust board.

Inspection team

Barry Yardsley, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Rob Johnstone

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Ofsted Inspector

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