

# Inspection of Watchorn Christian School

2 Derby Road, Alfreton, Derbyshire DE55 7AQ

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Inspection dates: 3 to 5 December 2024

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<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
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The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
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Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Good</b>
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Personal development	<b>Good</b>
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Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
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Early years provision	<b>Good</b>
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Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good
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Does the school meet the independent school standards?	<b>Yes</b>
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## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils enjoy attending this small, friendly and welcoming school. They thrive here. Many say that they look forward to coming to school because of the care that staff show them. Staff model the kindness and respect they expect pupils to show. Pupils respond by being kind, caring and wonderfully inclusive of each other.

The school has high expectations for all pupils. Staff want pupils 'to be the best they can be, inspired to excel both academically and in their character and behaviour'. Pupils rise to meet these ambitions and grow in confidence because of the rich experiences the school provides.

There are strong relationships between staff and pupils. The intimate nature of the school and its ethos of 'respect, purpose, love and grace' mean that all pupils are known well by staff. Pupils care for each other. Older pupils take responsibility for looking after younger children. Pupils say that they feel safe. They know that staff will take seriously any worries pupils may have.

Most parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive about the school. One parent, summing up the views of many others, said, 'This is a warm, welcoming school with a strong sense of community.'

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

The school is determined to provide the best education and care for pupils. Pupils benefit from an aspirational and broad curriculum. In many subjects, the school has thought carefully about the knowledge and skills pupils need to learn and when. For example, in physical education (PE), pupils systematically develop individual skills, such as body position, as well as tactics, which they then apply in games and competitive sports.

Teachers use their good subject knowledge to present information clearly and engage pupils in interesting learning activities. Pupils are helped to remember the 'sticky knowledge' they need and to talk with enthusiasm about what they have learned. This helps to deepen and extend their understanding. Pupils grow in confidence as learners.

Teachers often check pupils' progress in learning. For example, there are effective processes in place to find out what pupils know at the end of topics. However, the questions that teachers ask are not always precisely targeted so as to check if all pupils are secure in their understanding. This can lead to some pupils moving on to new learning without their misconceptions being fully addressed by staff.

Children in the early years get off to a strong start. The school has carefully mapped out the early years curriculum so that children can make the most of all learning opportunities. Children listen to a variety of nursery rhymes and stories. They are keen to join in and retell the rhymes and stories with enthusiasm and accuracy. The

sounds that children should learn are clearly identified and introduced expertly by staff. Children are well prepared for their next stage at school.

Staff implement the school's phonics programme consistently well. This allows pupils to quickly learn the letters and sounds they make. Staff provide prompt and focused support to help pupils to keep up, when necessary. Pupils soon become competent and fluent readers. Reading takes priority in the school's curriculum. The joy of reading is celebrated in every classroom. Pupils eagerly read at home for the chance to be entered into the raffle to win time in the reading café with a hot chocolate.

The school is ambitious for all pupils. Staff know individual pupils well. They are quick to identify any individual pupil's additional needs. They use this knowledge to support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) well. Dedicated staff carefully adapt how they teach the curriculum to these pupils. They include pupils with SEND in all aspects of the school community.

Pupils have highly positive attitudes to their learning and take their education seriously. Most focus on completing their work to a high standard and move around the school sensibly. Pupils are extremely polite and welcoming to visitors and those new to the school. The school's high expectations of attendance are clear from the outset. It engages well with families to support them in ensuring that their children's attendance remains high.

Pupils are prepared well for life beyond school. They learn about different beliefs and how families can be different. They benefit from strong pastoral care. As one parent stated, 'Staff are concerned with the development of my child as a whole: body, mind and spirit.' The various trips and visits pupils take part in develop their understanding of the world around them. They undertake purposeful activities in both the school and local communities. They work on charitable projects to raise money for people in other countries. Many pupils regularly enjoy the range of clubs available to them and the opportunities they have to develop their musical talents. Pupils sing together wonderfully in the choir.

The school is well led. The proprietor body and governors have a good understanding of the independent school standards ('the standards'). They make sure that the school consistently meets all the standards and the statutory requirements of the early years foundation stage. They support the school's strategy for continued improvement through regular visits to check on progress.

Staff are passionate about improving the school. They say that they feel valued and cared for and that their workload is carefully considered. They are proud to work at the school.

The premises are well maintained. Pupils' safety and well-being are central to the decisions leaders make. Risk assessments are accurate and reflect the school's policy. The school meets the requirements of schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010. The policies for relationships and health education, and safeguarding, are available on the school's website.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

### **What does the school need to do to improve? (Information for the school and proprietor)**

- Teachers do not always target questions precisely enough to ensure that they check the understanding of all pupils. Some pupils, particularly the younger ones in the class, can move on to new learning before their understanding is securely checked and any gaps in their knowledge resolved. When this occurs, these pupils cannot always access the next step in their learning as well as they could. The school should ensure that all teachers have the knowledge they need to ask effective and targeted questions that check all pupils' understanding of what they have learned and ensure that pupils are ready to move on in their learning.

### **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.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	144806
<b>DfE registration number</b>	830/6044
<b>Local authority</b>	Derbyshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10342129
<b>Type of school</b>	Other independent school
<b>School category</b>	Independent school
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	39
<b>Number of part-time pupils</b>	9
<b>Proprietor</b>	Watchorn Christian School
<b>Chair</b>	Chris Hand
<b>Headteacher</b>	Shani Ozenbrook (co-headteacher) Mark Ozenbrook (co-headteacher)
<b>Annual fees (day pupils)</b>	£2,490
<b>Telephone number</b>	01773 831 352
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.watchornchristianschool.co.uk">www.watchornchristianschool.co.uk</a>
<b>Email address</b>	<a href="mailto:info@wcschool.co.uk">info@wcschool.co.uk</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	8 to 10 March 2022

## Information about this school

- Watchorn Christian School is located in the premises of Watchorn Church, Derby Road, Alferton, Derbyshire DE55 7AQ.
- The school has a Christian religious character.
- The school is registered to have up to 45 pupils on its roll.
- The school is operated by the charity 'Watchorn Christian School'. The trustees of this charity make up the proprietor board. There is a separate group of school governors. These governors support the school and report to the trustees.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- The school provides breakfast and before-school care.

## Information about this inspection

Inspectors carried out this inspection under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008. The purpose of the inspection is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

The school meets the independent school standards. These are the requirements set out in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school's education provision.
- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- During the inspection, the school notified the Department for Education (DfE) of its intention to apply for a material change to increase the maximum number of pupils that it is permitted to have on roll to 55. As part of the inspection, the lead inspector considered the provision in relation to parts 3, 4 and 5 of the standards to check the school's likely compliance with these standards were the material application approved by the DfE. These checks have affirmed that the school is likely to meet the requirements of the standards checked if the school receives permission to increase its maximum number on roll in line with its request.
- Inspectors held meetings with the co-headteachers and deputy headteacher. The lead inspector met with members of the proprietor body, including the chair and some governors.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics and PE. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning, and looked at a sample of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also looked at curriculum plans and spoke to leaders about some other subjects.

- Inspectors considered a wide variety of school documents, including the school's policies and risk assessments.
- 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.
- Inspectors took note of parents' responses on the online survey for parents, Ofsted Parent View. Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted's survey of school staff. Inspectors met with pupils to discuss different aspects of the school's provision.
- Inspectors toured the premises and reviewed the school facilities.

### **Inspection team**

Dave Gilkerson, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Janis Warren

Ofsted Inspector

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