

Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: Churnet View Middle School

Churnet View, Leek, Staffordshire ST13 6PU

Inspection dates:

3 and 4 December 2024

Outcome

Churnet View Middle School has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

The headteacher of this school is Steve Fryer. This school is part of the Talentum Learning 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), Ian Wilson, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Richard Hey.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy school and attend regularly. Leaders want all pupils to do well. Although standards in reading and mathematics were low in Year 6 in 2024, most pupils are well prepared for high school by the time they leave in Year 8. The school has worked successfully to make sure the lesson content is accessible to pupils from their different starting points or learning needs.

Pupils had a say in the school's behaviour commitments, known as the 'five bees'. These are: 'be safe, be kind, be ready, be respectful and be the best you can be'. Consistently applied routines and high expectations ensure lessons are largely free of low-level disruptive behaviour. The corridors are calm. Pupils line up impeccably during the 'check in' and 'check out' at the start and end of the day. Pupils feel safe and report that if an incident occurs, staff deal with it well. The school has significantly reduced the number of suspensions.

Pupils take on responsibilities as prefects or ambassadors and sports council leaders and officiate at local sporting events in the community. Older pupils act as reading mentors. Pupils enjoyed their trips such as to Uttoxeter racecourse. They benefit from additional activities such as the school's fitness club and sensory and nurture club.

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

The standards achieved by pupils in their writing in Year 6 in 2024 compared favourably

with the national average, but their attainment was not as high in reading and mathematics. In response to this, the school has designed an ambitious curriculum that has literacy and numeracy at its heart. Well-trained teachers ensure they deliver it effectively. All of this is having a positive impact on pupils' achievement in reading and mathematics.

The school has introduced an appropriate phonics programme to support all pupils who need to catch up to become confident and fluent readers. Adults are well trained to support these pupils. This helps pupils who have not met the expected standard in Year 6 to catch up in Years 7 and 8. Similarly, in mathematics, effective support sessions help targeted individuals address gaps in their learning. There is dedicated reading time at the start of the morning and afternoon lessons. The new library makes an important contribution to promoting reading, where pupils can be librarians.

Teachers think carefully about their teaching and how they make improvements. Many undertake research to support their work. Consequently, a number of them lead several of the trust's learning networks, which helps other schools and their own development as practitioners.

Cross-curricular links between subject areas are well planned, for example in art lessons which celebrated Black History Month.

The school makes suitable adaptations across the curriculum for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). For example, it makes physical adjustments to the design and technology and science classrooms. Teachers use special equipment and learning materials to help pupils access their lessons. Leaders ensure teachers use their 'target pupil planners' to support pupils with specific needs. Consequently, pupils with SEND achieve well. Furthermore, governors have met all subject leaders to evaluate how they have adapted the curriculum. As a result, governors are well informed.

Teachers carefully check what pupils have learned to identify the next steps for teaching. On occasions, teachers do not spot pupils who have finished their work. In addition, some who have recently joined the school stop working when they get stuck and wait for help. This leads to lost learning time.

There are many opportunities for pupils' wider development, including learning about money matters with Leek United Building Society or participating in canoeing and kayaking. Pupils contribute to the wider community through harvest afternoon tea and Christmas lunches for the elderly. The personal, social, health and economic education programme promotes healthy relationships. Themes, such as cyberbullying and peer pressure are revisited at an age-appropriate level to ensure pupils are well informed. The school has invested significantly in building positive relationships between staff, pupils and parents and carers.

Staff are overwhelmingly appreciative of how leaders have considered their workload, for example providing them with the time to mark formal assessments and management time for subject leadership. Parents and pupils have positive views of the school. For example, a very large majority of parents said they would recommend the school to another parent.

None of the pupils responding to their survey said they would not recommend the school to a friend.

Governors know the school well. They have considerable expertise in education, such as on SEND and safeguarding, which they use to provide effective support and challenge.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Standards in reading and mathematics were below average at the end of Year 6, reflecting pupils' low starting points in Year 5. This means that a number of pupils are not ready for Year 7 and require additional support. Leaders should ensure their focus on reading and mathematics continues to improve standards by the end of key stage 2.
- In some instances, pupils become disengaged when they have either finished the work quickly or have got stuck and are waiting for help. This leads to lost learning time. The school should ensure that pupils receive work that is matched to their needs.

Background

Until September 2024, on a graded (section 5) inspection we gave schools an overall effectiveness grade, in addition to the key and provision judgements. Overall effectiveness grades given before September 2024 will continue to be visible on school inspection reports and on Ofsted's website. From September 2024 graded inspections will not include an overall effectiveness grade. This school was, before September 2024, judged to be good for its overall effectiveness.

We have now inspected the school to determine whether it has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at that previous inspection. 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's work has improved significantly or that it may not be as strong as it was at the last inspection, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection. A graded inspection 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 first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good for overall effectiveness in February 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	142696
Local authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	10344070
Type of school	Middle deemed secondary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	9 to 13
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	437
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of local governing body	John Fisher
CEO of the trust	Ian Wilson
Headteacher	Steve Fryer
Website	https://cvm.tlt.org.uk
Dates of previous inspection	12 and 13 February 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The CEO of the trust took up his position since the last inspection.
- The school does not currently use alternative provision.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

Information about this inspection

- 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. The inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher and deputy headteacher, other leaders and staff.

- Inspectors spoke to groups of pupils.
- The lead inspector met with members of the board of trustees, including the chair.
- The lead inspector met with members of the local governing body, including the chair.
- The lead inspector considered responses to Ofsted Parent View. This included free-text comments. He also considered additional feedback from parents. He reviewed responses to Ofsted’s online surveys for staff and pupils. He considered information on pupils’ behaviour, attendance and personal development.
- Inspectors focused inspection activity on the following groups of subjects: reading, mathematics and the wider curriculum (art and design, history and physical education). For each group of subjects, they visited a sample of lessons, spoke with pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils’ work.
- The lead inspector heard pupils reading in lessons.
- 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.

Inspection team

Mark Sims, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

David Hermitt

Ofsted Inspector

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