

Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: St Gabriel's CofE Primary School

Landhayes Road, Redhills, Exeter, Devon EX4 2BY

Inspection dates:

10 and 11 December 2024

Outcome

St Gabriel's CofE Primary School has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

The headteacher of this school is Luke Williams. This school is part of The Academies for Character and Excellence, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Cheryl Weyman, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Roger Willoughby.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are rightly proud to attend this happy and welcoming school. They understand what it means to be successful and demonstrate positive attitudes towards their learning. Staff build warm relationships with pupils, ensuring that they learn in a calm and nurturing environment. This begins in the newly joined pre-school, where children settle well and form secure relationships.

Pupils learn well through an ambitious curriculum that integrates 'academic excellence, character development, and metacognition'. This curriculum sets high expectations for what pupils can achieve across these three areas. Pupils embrace the school's ambition, understanding that there are no limits to what they can achieve, both in school and beyond.

The school brings its vision of 'Communicating strength; inspiring our community to flourish' to life by supporting pupils and their families in a variety of meaningful ways. For example, pupils take the lead in the 'reverse advent', promoting care for others in the community through donations to the foodbank. These leadership roles instil pride in pupils, who value making a difference. The school ambitiously broadens opportunities through numerous experiences pupils may not otherwise have. All pupils benefit from this, including the most disadvantaged. They talk enthusiastically about how these experiences enhance their knowledge of the wider world.

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

Across subjects, the school has identified the important knowledge and vocabulary pupils need to learn. Consequently, teachers are clear about what to teach and when. The school has more recently incorporated the needs of some mixed-aged classes well within the curriculum design.

Staff benefit from the training and support provided. They value working with colleagues to develop their expertise. Teachers use a range of effective strategies to help pupils learn well. For example, they use questions to deepen pupils' knowledge and to help them make links with what they already know and remember. Pupils recall previous learning through the 'revisit' opportunities to help them secure knowledge into their long-term memory. As a result, pupils learn the curriculum well.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) benefit from individualised learning plans to gain the help they need. These pupils understand their learning targets well and take pride in showing when they achieve them. Consequently, pupils with SEND learn the curriculum successfully alongside their peers.

The school checks regularly how well pupils are learning the curriculum to help identify and address any gaps in pupils' knowledge. However, on a small number of occasions, some pupils do not receive the support they need to eliminate their misconceptions. Sometimes, future learning does not build on what these pupils already know and can do. This hampers how well some pupils progress through the curriculum.

The school supports pupils well to learn to read. Pupils receive regular opportunities to practise and revisit new sounds. The school checks carefully how well pupils learn to read and provides swift support for those who need it. This helps pupils to become confident and fluent readers. The school promotes a love of reading. Pupils speak fondly about the authors and the books they enjoy. The school carefully selects books it wants pupils to know. These include texts to promote pupils' understanding of different cultures and diversity to ensure that all pupils see their lived experiences represented in the stories they read.

Pupils learn in a calm and orderly school. This is because the school has established clear routines for pupils to follow. In lessons, pupils remain focused and engaged. They take real pride in their 'learning journey' books that capture their learning. Pupils with more challenging behaviour benefit from additional support. The school works intensively on the provision in place for these pupils to help them to become successful. Staff have developed their expertise to manage and support challenging behaviour. This work is having a positive impact on the number of suspensions for some pupils. However, this work is in its infancy and so the overall rate of suspensions remains high.

The school's work on supporting pupils' personal development is a strength. The curriculum weaves 'character education' throughout to develop pupils well beyond the academic. The school underpins this work with its character values. For example, pupils deepen their knowledge of 'determination' through inspirational visitors who encourage

them to aim high for what they can achieve for themselves. Pupils interact across classes for 'family group' time where pupils learn about the wider world. For example, they learn how to keep themselves safe, including when online.

The school, alongside the trust and those responsible for governance, is ambitious and determined for all pupils to do well at 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)

- On a small number of occasions, the checks the school makes on how well pupils are learning the curriculum do not fully identify and address the misconceptions that some pupils have. As a result, these pupils make repeated errors in their learning that go unaddressed. The trust needs to ensure that checks on pupils' learning are precise and that staff address any misconceptions identified to help pupils to build their knowledge securely.
- The intensive support in place to help pupils with challenging behaviour has not yet led to a reduction in the number of pupil suspensions. As a result, these remain high. The trust must further embed the systems and support for managing the most challenging behaviour. It must also ensure that pupil suspensions continue to reduce and that these pupils get all the help they need to show positive learning behaviours.

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 second ungraded inspection since we judged the predecessor school, Redhills Community Primary School, to be good for overall effectiveness in December 2012.

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	142802
Local authority	Devon
Inspection number	10344716
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	195
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Roger Willoughby
CEO of the trust	Cheryl Weyman
Headteacher	Luke Williams
Website	www.stgabrielsprimary.org
Date of previous inspection	13 October 2020, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Since the last inspection, the school has changed its name from Redhills Community Primary School to St Gabriel's CofE Primary School.
- This school is part of The Academies for Character and Excellence trust.
- The school is now designated as having a religious character. The school is in the Diocese of Exeter. The school has not yet received a section 48 inspection for schools of a religious character. This inspection is due to take place within five years of the school becoming a Church of England school.
- In September 2024, the school has taken on the pre-school that was previously run by an external provider. It admits children from two years old.
- The school provides a before- and after-school club.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.

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 inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in her evaluation of the school.
- The inspector spoke with school leaders, curriculum leaders, those responsible for governance, a representative from the diocese and a representative from the trust.
- The inspector visited a sample of lessons, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- 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 observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school site. Additionally, the inspector spoke to pupils to discuss their views about the school.
- The inspector considered responses to Ofsted's online survey for parents, Ofsted Parent View. The inspector also considered responses to Ofsted's online survey for staff.

Inspection team

Esther Best, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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