

Inspection of a good school: Christ Church CofE Primary School

Shieldfield Green, Newcastle upon Tyne, Tyne and Wear NE2 1XA

Inspection date: 10 November 2021

Outcome

Christ Church CofE Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Christ Church CofE Primary School is a place where all pupils are valued. Staff are attentive to the individual needs of pupils. Pupils feel happy and safe because of the care and support they receive. Pupils are kind and polite. Teachers have built a climate where pupils live out values such as respect in their daily actions.

Many pupils arrive at school at different points over the school year. A high number of pupils arrive from different countries. These pupils settle quickly because of the warm welcome they receive from staff and pupils. Staff are responsive to their emotional needs. They also help pupils to progress in their learning through the strong support for pupils' communication and language.

Pupils benefit from well-planned and exciting experiences. Pupils are encouraged to try new activities, such as kayaking and paddleboarding. They have developed circus skills, including unicycling. Pupils receive opportunities to enjoy horse riding. These experiences enrich the curriculum and build pupils' self-esteem.

Teachers create a nurturing atmosphere. Pupils are caring and considerate. They behave well in lessons and around the school site. Bullying is extremely rare. Pupils are confident that teachers address any concerns they may have.

The care provided to pupils extends to their families. Over the course of the COVID-19 pandemic, staff have helped families with a range of resources to meet their needs. This included computers to help pupils to learn from home.

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

Pupils benefit from an ambitious and exciting curriculum. They learn important knowledge in their subjects. They also develop as thoughtful and considerate pupils, with an understanding of important issues.

Leaders have placed reading at the centre of the school's work. Many children arrive with limited reading experience. Some children arrive from other countries with little, if any, experience of written or spoken English. Teachers develop personalised strategies to support pupils' reading. Children in the early years receive an excellent start to reading. Leaders use the phonics programme to meet pupils' needs. Adults have expertise in phonics teaching. They know how to adapt approaches to support pupils who speak English as an additional language. Books are matched to the sounds pupils know. Teachers provide effective support for pupils who need extra help. Over time, this has helped pupils to become effective readers. This also helps their progression across the curriculum.

This love of reading continues throughout the school. Teachers carefully select texts that reinforce key themes, such as resilience and equality. These texts also help pupils develop an awareness of different literary styles. Pupils read texts by writers from different cultures and traditions. Already this year, pupils' interest in reading has been enlivened by two visiting writers.

Leaders have developed a coherent mathematics curriculum. Teachers plan learning to build on what pupils already know. Assessment is used well. Teachers adapt the curriculum to address gaps in pupils' understanding. The pupils inspectors talked to showed a good understanding of the curriculum.

Pupils benefit from an increasingly ambitious wider curriculum. In many subjects, leaders have a clear picture of the important knowledge they want pupils to learn. This was evident in history, science and physical education. These plans often span from the early years to Year 6. The disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic has reduced opportunities to apply and check new curriculum plans. In some subjects, curriculum plans are less developed. Leaders are aware of this and have plans in place for the curriculum to be fully in place in the near future.

Leaders take great care to enhance pupils' personal development. Pupils visit the theatre and museums to build their cultural capital. On the day of the inspection, pupils worked with a theatre company to explore concepts of democracy. Teachers develop pupils' physical health. They encourage participation in sport. Recently, all key stage 2 pupils represented the school in at least one sporting competition. This reflects teachers' high aspirations for pupils. Pupils develop awareness as global citizens. They show curiosity in the world and a respect for cultural differences.

Pupils behave well in lessons and at social times. They show kindness towards one another and towards their teachers. Leaders have developed a happy and caring place for pupils and adults.

In the early years, adults consider how to build pupils' knowledge and skills through their learning and play. Children receive an effective start to their early reading. Adults develop strong learning routines. In Nursery, children sat in silent anticipation as their teacher whispered instructions. They then eagerly selected drums and tambourines to represent the sounds of foxes and squirrels.

Leaders demonstrate clear moral purpose. They ensure that school values inform their actions. Staff appreciate the support of leaders. Leaders have reduced assessment burdens. They have adapted staff timetables when workload has been high. They have provided specific training on mindfulness. The care and kindness provided for pupils extends to staff.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Teachers are continually mindful of pupils' safety and welfare. Senior leaders work with external consultants to ensure that staff are trained in how to keep children safe. They update policies in line with government guidance. Staff know what to do if they have concerns over pupils' welfare. Leaders follow up any concerns over pupils' safety. When necessary, they work with external partners to support pupils and families. On occasions, records do not fully capture the actions leaders have taken to keep children safe. Leaders carry out appropriate checks on the suitability of adults working at the school. Governors are aware of the actions leaders take to keep children safe, although some gaps remain in their oversight of safeguarding procedures.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The curriculum is well-planned and sequenced in many subjects, including mathematics, science and physical education. In other subjects, it is less well developed. The impact of COVID-19 has affected the implementation of plans. Leaders need to continue developing the curriculum so that pupils acquire deep knowledge and skills across all subjects.
- Over the past 18 months, leaders and governors have had fewer opportunities to assure themselves of aspects of the school's work. This includes checking the impact of curriculum plans and safeguarding procedures. Work in this area has been restricted by the effects of COVID-19. Leaders, including governors, now need to strengthen processes for checking the quality of the school's work. This should include additional checks on the curriculum and safeguarding procedures. This will provide leaders with the support and challenge to secure further improvement.

The areas for improvement show that the school's curriculum is not yet sufficiently well planned and sequenced in some subjects. However, it is clear that leaders have already taken action to further develop the curriculum and provide staff with additional training. For this reason, the transitional arrangements have been applied.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good or outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the section 8 inspection as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the second section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in October 2016.

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.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	108493
Local authority	Newcastle upon Tyne
Inspection number	10200197
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	126
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Linsley de la Hunt
Headteacher	Sandra Furno
Website	www.christchurch.newcastle.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	11 October 2016, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school serves an increasingly diverse community. A much higher proportion of pupils join school at times other than the start of the school year than is seen nationally. Many of these pupils arrive from other countries.
- Since the previous inspection, a deputy headteacher has joined the school.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation.
- Inspectors held several discussions with the headteacher and deputy headteacher. They also talked to a range of teachers about the curriculum and wider aspects of school life.
- Inspectors looked in detail into the curriculum in reading, mathematics and history. They talked to leaders and teachers about their curriculum plans. They also talked to

pupils about what pupils knew and remembered in these subjects. They looked at pupils' work and visited lessons.

- Inspectors talked to members of the local governing body to find out how they support and challenge school leaders.
- Inspectors checked safeguarding arrangements. They looked at the school's work to make staff and pupils aware of safeguarding issues. They also looked at safeguarding records to see how concerns over pupils' safety are recorded and followed up. They looked at the checks made on the suitability of staff working at the school.
- The inspectors talked to the deputy director of education for the Dioceses of Durham and Newcastle. They talked to the school improvement partner.
- Inspectors considered six free-text responses to Ofsted's Parent View questionnaire. There were no responses to Ofsted's pupil or staff questionnaires.
- Inspectors talked to pupils to gather their views on school life.

Inspection team

Malcolm Kirtley, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Julie McGrane

Ofsted Inspector

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