

Inspection of a good school: Church Hill Infant School

Church Hill Road, Thurmaston, Leicester, Leicestershire LE4 8DE

Inspection dates:

12 and 13 March 2024

Outcome

Church Hill Infant School continues to be a good school.

The headteacher of this school is Claire Elliott. This school is part of the Bradgate Education Partnership, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Gareth Nelmes, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Stephen Cotton.

What is it like to attend this school?

Church Hill Infant School is a welcoming and inclusive school. It is very proud of its diverse community and wants the best for all its pupils. One parent told the inspector: 'This is a wonderful school – the best choice we ever made for our son!'

The school's values of 'determination, excellence, kindness, teamwork and uniqueness' are interwoven into all aspects of school life. Pupils are proud to receive a number of behaviour rewards, particularly 'pom-poms', when they positively display these values around school.

Pupils say they enjoy coming to school and feel safe. Bullying is rare. When bullying does occur, pupils are confident that adults in school will sort it out. 'Happy lunchtimes' provide opportunities for pupils to be active, to work together on games, sports and activities, and learn about rules. 'Playground pals' support others to play games nicely and make friends.

Pupils were excited to tell the inspector that they enjoy trips to the museum and the space centre. They enjoy going to the local church each year to sing Christmas carols and visiting a local farm. During their time at the school, pupils get to take part in clubs such as multi-sports, arts and construction.

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

The school is ambitious for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Adaptations, such as pre-teaching, scaffolding and resources which interest pupils, ensure that all pupils can access the curriculum and achieve well. For example, in mathematics, pupils in the early years use three-dimensional shapes to build the tallest castle using the story 'Rapunzel'. In physical education (PE), pupils are

provided with examples to support them to create shapes and balances. However, sometimes the key knowledge that the school wants pupils to know and remember is not always taught explicitly. This means that in some lessons, a few pupils cannot recall what they have learned and misunderstand what they have been taught. This is not always checked and corrected early enough by some adults.

Reading is a priority within the school. Classrooms and corridors, including in the early years, are well resourced with books for pupils to read aloud and share with others. Pupils enjoy the 'class vote' when deciding their daily class read. The school has developed a clear strategy and approach to the teaching of early reading. They have made it work for their pupils and have adapted their ambitious reading curriculum to meet the needs of the current cohort. When pupils do not keep up with the pace of the early reading curriculum, leaders ensure that interventions are put in place quickly. Adults in school are well trained and encourage pupils to use sounds to help them read and spell unfamiliar words. However, sometimes some adults are not always as consistent and concise in this approach. This means that some pupils cannot read as fluently as they should.

Behaviour in lessons is generally calm and well managed by staff. When low-level disruption occurs, particularly in the dining hall, adults use the behaviour system consistently to address this. Pupils' attendance at school is high. Leaders do all that is reasonably possible to address the low attendance of a very small group of pupils. Without delay, the school puts in place support and involves external professionals where necessary.

Pupils get to dress up and taste different foods as part of Chinese New Year and Diwali celebrations. This promotes pupils spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. As part of the 'dreams and goals' curriculum, visitors from the ambulance and fire service come into school to talk to pupils about what they want to be when they are older. Pupils in Year 2 value and enjoy an overnight residential at Beaumanor Hall. They also have regular opportunities to visit their destination junior school in preparation for their next steps. Pupils say they enjoy attending lots of trips each year, such as to Warwick Castle and going to see the local pantomime. Leaders recognise that some pupils have commitments outside of school too, such as attending worship. They finely balance this alongside their extra-curricular offer.

The board of trustees provides the right balance of support and challenge to leaders. Its members have ensured there are robust systems in place to gain the information they need from the local advisory board (LAB). The LAB is predominantly made up of parents and carers. They are firmly rooted and invested in the school's local community.

Staff are very complimentary about the support they receive for their workload and well-being. Staff turnover is minimal, and many are long-serving and are committed to the school. They are happy and proud to be part of Church Hill Infant School.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have designed an ambitious reading curriculum. However, sometimes the teaching of reading is not as precise as it could be. This means that some pupils find it difficult to blend sounds when reading. The school should continue to ensure that all staff understand how to teach reading effectively and consistently in pursuit of raising standards even higher.
- Leaders have clearly defined the key knowledge and vocabulary that they want pupils to know and use. However, in a small number of subjects, this is not taught as precisely as it could be. This means that some pupils do not retain important knowledge and are sometimes taught misconceptions. The school needs to continue to ensure that teaching consistently enables pupils to remember important knowledge. Adults in the classroom need to closely check that pupils know and understand this knowledge well so that pupils can achieve as well as they can.

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 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 would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which 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 school to be good in May 2014.

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

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| Unique reference number | 138929 |
| Local authority | Leicestershire |
| Inspection number | 10313282 |
| Type of school | Infant |
| School category | Academy converter |
| Age range of pupils | 5 to 7 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 165 |
| Appropriate authority | Board of trustees |
| Chair of trust | Stephen Cotton |
| CEO of the trust | Gareth Nelmes |
| Headteacher | Claire Elliott |
| Website | www.churchhillinfants.bepschools.org |
| Date of previous inspection | 3 July 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 |

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Bradgate Education Partnership.
- At the time of the inspection, no pupils attended alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement 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 his evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met and spoke with leaders, staff, pupils, parents, governors and representatives from the board of trustees.

- The inspector carried out deep dives into these subjects: early reading, mathematics, and PE. The inspector discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, teachers and pupils, visited lessons and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspector considered 13 responses to the Ofsted Parent View questionnaire. He took account of the responses to the confidential staff survey, as well as the views of pupils that were gathered throughout the inspection.
- 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 met with the school's special educational needs and/or disabilities coordinator (SENDCo).

Inspection team

Clive Lawrence, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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