

St Chad's CofE (VC) Primary School

St Michael Road, Lichfield, Staffordshire WS13 6SN

Inspection dates

3–4 May 2017

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The headteacher, ably supported by other leaders and governors, ensures that pupils are provided with a wide range of opportunities to help them thrive socially and academically.
- Children make good progress from their starting points in the early years due to good teaching and well-planned activities that stimulate their interest. The recently established Nursery class is helping to enhance provision further for children from the time they start in school.
- Teachers make learning relevant and exciting for pupils. As a result, pupils make good progress across all subjects as they move through the school. However, teachers' expectations of what the most able pupils can and should achieve, especially in writing, are not always high enough.
- The teaching of reading is particularly effective and pupils develop a love of reading and a deep understanding of what they have read.
- Teachers ensure that pupils are provided with good opportunities to apply their reading, writing and mathematical skills in other subjects. However, in mathematics teachers do not consistently provide enough opportunities for pupils to apply their computational skills and knowledge in problem-solving using reasoning.
- Leaders ensure that pupils develop as compassionate and caring individuals who are well prepared for life in modern Britain. The promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a strength of the school.
- Pupils say they feel safe in school and are provided by staff with valuable and relevant information on how they can keep themselves safe.
- The overwhelming majority of pupils are well behaved and show highly positive attitudes to learning. While leaders have taken strong, effective and appropriate action to address unacceptable behaviour from a very small minority of pupils, they are aware that there is a need to ensure that the school's agreed behaviour policy is applied fully and accurately by all staff.
- Leaders have an accurate view of the school's strengths and have been proactive in identifying how it can improve further. Plans for improvement focus on the most important priorities for the school. However, a lack of clearly defined success criteria means that leaders cannot always accurately measure the full impact of the actions that they have taken.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further improve the quality of teaching so that all pupils, especially the most able, make rapid rates of progress and more achieve greater depth in their learning by:
 - ensuring that teachers provide pupils with sufficient opportunities to apply maths computational skills in problem solving using reasoning
 - ensuring that all teachers have sufficiently high expectations of all pupils and set tasks that are challenging and well matched to pupils abilities, especially in writing.
- Ensure that all staff use agreed school approaches to address and improve any inappropriate behaviour shown by a very small minority of pupils.
- Further improve leadership and management by ensuring that plans for improvement contain clearly defined success criteria.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher has successfully ensured that the school's mantra of 'Achieve through Belief' is at the heart of all the work of St Chad's CofE Primary School. She has high expectations of what each pupil is capable of achieving and has been resolute in ensuring that all staff share and are committed to the same high standards. She is well supported by the deputy headteacher and other leaders in school. Leaders are encouraged to identify how best practice, both within school and at other schools, can be used to support teachers and other staff in their ongoing professional development.
- All teachers undertake leadership roles and are actively involved in monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching and learning within their area of responsibility. Leaders undertake regular observations of lessons, scrutiny of pupils' work and analysis of the assessment information that they gather about pupils' attainment and progress. They use this information well to identify where extra support is needed for individuals or groups of pupils, and this helps to ensure that pupils do not fall behind in their learning.
- Leaders set challenging performance targets for teachers, based on the needs of the school and the individual. These targets are closely linked to the professional standards for teachers. Where teaching has not been sufficiently effective, leaders have taken strong and incisive action to bring about the necessary improvements.
- The additional pupil premium funding that the school receives is used very effectively to support the small number of disadvantaged pupils. The deputy headteacher has carried out a review of the provision for these pupils and, as a result, has made changes in the way that additional support is provided. Teaching assistants and other adults are allocated to provide specific interventions and the effectiveness of this work is analysed closely to ensure that it has the best possible impact.
- The curriculum has been well planned to ensure that there is appropriate breadth and balance across all subjects and to capture pupils' interest and engagement. The thematic approach is delivered through termly and half-termly topics based on a series of questions, such as, 'Were the Vikings Always Victorious and Vicious?' and 'What Makes the Earth Angry?' Pupils' learning is supported and enhanced well through trips and visits, including to Lichfield Cathedral and Compton Verney Viking village.
- Pupils appreciate and benefit from the good range of extra-curricular activities that they have access to, including after-school clubs for Lego, cookery, drama and dance. The after-school choir is well attended and has participated successfully in a Young Voices performance in Birmingham.
- The primary sports funding is used effectively to develop teachers' confidence and skills in teaching this aspect of the curriculum and to broaden the range of physical activities available to the pupils. This has resulted in a greater number of pupils regularly taking part in sports activities, including tennis, karate, and handball. Parents are kept well informed about the developments in physical education through the termly newsletter that the leader has introduced this year.

- The leadership of provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is good and helps to ensure that these pupils can fully access their learning. The additional funding is used to provide additional support from trained teaching assistants and an intervention teacher. Links with outside agencies, including autism support and behaviour support, are used well to work with individual pupils and provide advice to staff. Parents are kept well informed about the support that is available to their children, including through workshops related to specific needs such as autism. Parents have also been involved in developing a 'Parent/carer guide to inclusion at St Chad's'.
- The promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is particularly strong and helps to prepare pupils for their future lives within society. Pupils participate regularly in 'international days' that have widened their understanding of other countries, both within Europe and across the world. Leaders have been proactive in ensuring that pupils develop a depth of understanding of different faiths and beliefs beyond the Christian ethos of the school, including through a bi-annual visit to the 'Faith Trail' in Derby.
- The very large majority of parents are positive about the work that the school does with their children. Parents who spoke to inspectors during the inspection all believed that their children were well taught and well cared for. While a very small minority of parents who responded to the online questionnaire expressed some concerns, evidence gathered during the inspection indicated that school leaders had taken appropriate action to address the issues raised.
- School improvement plans are detailed and focus on appropriate and relevant priorities. However, leaders recognise that the lack of sharply defined success criteria limits their capacity to measure the full impact of the actions that they are taking.

Governance of the school

- Governors have a good understanding of the strengths of the school and know where it can still improve further. The changes that governors have made to their organisational structure means that meetings are used more productively and all governors have an accurate view of the work of the school.
- Governors have effective systems in place for monitoring and evaluation. Governors receive regular, detailed reports on pupils' progress and use this information to ask searching questions of school leaders. They use external information to compare how pupils are doing against other schools. They are well informed about the use and impact of the additional funding that is available to the school, and are knowledgeable about the improvements in outcomes of disadvantaged pupils.
- Governors were proactive in identifying the benefits that the introduction of a nursery could have for the school and have taken difficult but appropriate decisions to ensure that there would be sufficient funding to enable high-quality provision to be implemented. Governors have ensured that they have kept themselves abreast of developments in the nursery, both through visits and reports from school leaders.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- There is a strong culture of collective and shared responsibility for safeguarding at St Chad's CofE Primary. Leaders have ensured that all staff are well trained and fully understand the processes for identifying and reporting any concerns. A number of staff are trained to the higher level and are consequently in a strong position to deal with any safeguarding incidents that arise, alongside the headteacher who is the designated safeguarding lead.
- There are robust recruitment systems in place to ensure that staff appointed to the school do not pose any risk to pupils. Newly appointed staff receive detailed information on the school's safeguarding policies and procedures as part of their induction. Checks on visitors to the school are rigorous and access to the school building is well controlled.
- Pupils are well supported in keeping themselves safe. Pupils understand the importance of keeping passwords secure when using the internet and not giving out personal information.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teachers have good subject knowledge and use this effectively to plan lessons that are interesting and relevant to the pupils. Relationships between adults and pupils are based on mutual respect and, as a result, pupils work hard and take pride in their work.
- Teachers' assessment of pupils' work is regular, thorough and is used to plan work that is matched to the different abilities of pupils in the class. Teachers work alongside each other and with staff from other schools to check the accuracy and validity of their assessments.
- Teaching assistants provide valuable support, especially to pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. They provide clear instructions and break tasks down into small stages so that pupils are fully able to understand what they need to do and then to undertake the activities themselves.
- Teachers use questioning well, both to assess pupils' understanding and as a means of developing pupils' communication skills. Teachers pose questions that require pupils to consider their answers and to think deeply about their response.
- The teaching of reading is particularly strong. Teachers and teaching assistants receive regular training in the use of phonics and apply this knowledge well in lessons with the younger pupils. This ensures that pupils have a secure knowledge of the sounds that letters make in words and can blend the sounds to read with increasing fluency. Pupils are encouraged to read regularly and this aspect of learning is regarded as a core part of the homework that pupils are expected to undertake. Adults read interesting and age-appropriate books and stories to pupils and this helps to engender a love of reading that pupils retain as they move through the school.
- Teachers ensure that they plan and create good opportunities for pupils to apply their reading, writing and mathematical skills in other subjects such as science and history.

Whole-school science weeks enable pupils to make predictions and to undertake practical investigative work.

- Teachers ensure that pupils develop a secure knowledge of computational skills, such as multiplication and subtraction, and subject knowledge in areas such as fractions and decimals in mathematics. However, opportunities for pupils to apply these skills in problem-solving using reasoning are not consistent across all classes and this impacts on some pupils' depth of understanding.
- While all teachers expect pupils to apply themselves fully to their work, not all teachers have sufficiently high expectations of what the most able pupils can and should achieve. This is particularly the case in writing, where the tasks set for the most able pupils are not always sufficiently challenging. This was borne out by the comments of some of these pupils who said that occasionally they found their work too easy.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils are polite, courteous and cooperate well with each other and with adults. They are appreciative of the opportunities that they have to take on responsibility and recognise that these are beneficial both to themselves as individuals and to the wider community. An example of this is the code of conduct for visitors that the school council devised.
- Pupils are well supported as citizens of modern Britain. They undertake debates each term linked to democratic issues, such as the advantages and disadvantages of the proposed high-speed rail link. Pupils also are enabled to develop future life skills through an annual enterprise week, where they devise and market a product or service. The funds raised through their endeavours are subsequently used to benefit the whole school community.
- Pupils say that that bullying is extremely rare and that when it has occurred, it has been dealt with swiftly and effectively by staff. They understand the differences between bullying and unkind behaviour. Pupils understand the problems that social media can pose and recognise the consequences and unacceptability of online bullying.
- Pupils say that they feel safe at school. Leaders make good use of external speakers, including the local community police officers, to raise pupils' awareness of water safety, with particular reference to the local canals.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils behave well in lessons and low-level disruption is rare. Pupils listen attentively and with respect to teachers and other adults. They play well with each other at breaktimes and lunchtime and move sensibly around the school buildings.

- Leaders have taken strong action to address any inappropriate behaviour that does occur. They have been successful in bringing about significant improvements for some pupils who have displayed challenging and unacceptable behaviour. However, pupils say that there are occasions when some staff are not consistent in their use of rewards and sanctions and do not act swiftly enough to address unacceptable behaviour from a very small minority of pupils. While the large majority of parents believe that behaviour is good, a small minority support the views of pupils as to the need for fully consistent management of behaviour.
- There are robust systems in place to monitor and promote good attendance. As a result, overall attendance has been consistently above the national average for the past three years. Pupils enjoy coming to school and recognise the impact that regular attendance has on their learning. The attendance of the small number of disadvantaged pupils in school has improved significantly and is now broadly in line with that of other pupils.
- The well-run before- and after-school club is valued and appreciated by parents and their children. It provides pupils with a calm and nurturing environment and a range of interesting activities.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Pupils make good progress from their starting points in school and, as a result, achieve standards that are above the national average.
- In 2016, the proportions of pupils meeting the expected standards in reading, writing and mathematics in Year 2 were above the national average. This was also the case for pupils in Year 6. Pupils had made progress from their starting points that was broadly average in these subjects, with the strongest progress in reading.
- Pupils who are currently in school are making good progress across all subjects. Evidence seen in pupils' books supported the school's own assessment information and indicated that there was no significant difference between groups of pupils, including between boys and girls. Lower ability pupils make particularly strong progress as a result of teaching and support that is very well matched to their specific needs.
- Over recent years, disadvantaged pupils' outcomes have been slightly below those of other pupils nationally. As a result of the sharpened focus on their needs that is now evident, these pupils are now making accelerated progress and differences are diminishing rapidly.
- Outcomes in the national phonics screening check for pupils in Year 1 have been above the national average in recent years. This is a result of the high emphasis that the school places on ensuring that early reading is taught systematically and effectively.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress. There is a strong focus on identifying what the barriers to learning are and to matching support accurately to each pupil's needs. Progress is monitored rigorously and as a result of the effective provision, the majority of these pupils make rapid and sustained progress.
- The most able pupils in school, including the most able disadvantaged pupils, are not consistently achieving sufficiently high outcomes. In the 2016 national assessments,

the proportion of pupils working at greater depth in Year 2 was slightly below the national average in reading and mathematics. While the proportion in Year 6 working at greater depth in both reading and mathematics was above the national average, too few pupils were working at greater depth in writing. While the most able pupils currently in school are often provided with work that is harder than that of other pupils, there is still a need to ensure that it is consistently challenging for these pupils across all subjects.

Early years provision

Good

- Children start in school with skills and knowledge that are broadly typical for their age. As a result of good teaching and high expectations from teachers and other staff they make good progress across all areas of learning. In 2016, the proportion of children who achieved a good level of development was well above the national average. The school's own assessment information and evidence gathered during the inspection, indicates that children currently in school are making similarly good progress. Children enter Year 1 very well prepared for their next stage of education.
- Despite the Nursery class having only been introduced in September 2016, provision for the youngest children in school is already good. Staff ensure that the needs of both the two- and three-year-old children are appropriately met. The indoor and outdoor classrooms are attractive and well-resourced places that allow children to explore and investigate through well-planned activities. As a result, children make good progress in developing physical skills and extending their language and communication abilities.
- Staff in the Reception class ensure that there is a good balance of child-initiated activities and structured, adult-led tasks. They are careful not to place a ceiling on children's learning and as a result, standards of reading, writing and mathematical development are high. For example, children were observed during the inspection to be engrossed with writing their own stories about 'Jack and the Beanstalk' and used a range of complex vocabulary. They showed sustained concentration and produced pieces of writing with accurate spelling, well-formed handwriting and good sentence structure.
- The teaching of phonics within early reading is particularly effective and contributes markedly to children's strong progress. Children develop an appreciation of stories and apply their phonic knowledge well within their written work.
- Assessment is used well by staff to measure children's progress and to identify the next steps in learning.
- Parents are valued as partners in their children's education. They are kept well informed about the progress that the children are making. All parents spoken to during the inspection were highly positive about the work of the early years staff.
- All welfare and safeguarding requirements are fully met. Staff development is strong, with all staff having appropriate first-aid training.
- The additional funding that the school receives, including for disadvantaged children, is used well. Children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities receive additional support, including through advice from outside agencies, such as speech therapists.

- Children are happy, well behaved and form good relationships. They understand the need to take turns and to share.
- Leadership of the early years is currently undertaken by the headteacher and another senior leader. Leaders monitor and evaluate provision accurately. They recognise that there is the potential for further development of the early years leadership to allow for sharing of expertise both within school and across other settings.

School details

Unique reference number	124259
Local authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	10032656

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	213
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	John Smith
Headteacher	Claire Evans
Telephone number	01543 512 000
Website	www.st-chads-lichfield.staffs.sch.uk
Email address	headteacher@st-chads-lichfield.staffs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	9–10 May 2013

Information about this school

- The school does not meet requirements on the publication of information about the most recent key stage 2 results on its website.
- St Chad's CofE Primary School is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is below average.
- The large majority of pupils are White British.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is above the national average
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics for pupils in Year 6.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed pupils' learning in 14 lessons or parts of lessons. A number of these observations were undertaken with the headteacher and deputy headteacher.
- The inspectors looked at work in pupils' books and listened to pupils read. They met with a group of pupils, including members of the school council. The inspectors observed pupils' behaviour at lunch and breaktimes, as well as in lessons.
- The inspectors looked at a range of documentation, including assessments and records of pupils' progress, the school's checks and records relating to safeguarding, child protection and attendance, records of how teaching is managed and the school improvement plans.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, a senior leader and a middle leader. The lead inspector met with six members of the governing body, including the chair of the governing body.
- The inspectors took account of the 59 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, and considered free-text responses from parents. They also talked to parents at the start of the school day. They considered the 19 responses to the staff questionnaire and the 31 responses to the pupil questionnaire.

Inspection team

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