

Inspection of Chesterton Primary School

Brittain Avenue, Chesterton, Newcastle-Under-Lyme, Staffordshire ST5 7NT

Inspection dates: 8–9 June 2021

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Inadequate

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils thrive here because the quality of education has improved so much. Leaders put pupils at the heart of everything they do. Leaders, staff and governors have high expectations and are determined that all pupils achieve well. They care about pupils and support and challenge them to do their very best.

Pupils talk enthusiastically about their learning. They find the curriculum interesting, and this is reflected in the high-quality work in their books. Pupils benefit from rich experiences to enhance their learning. For example, older pupils remember learning about the Vikings and their trip to York. They love to learn new things. Pupils concentrate and work hard in class. Pupils have very positive attitudes and want to come to school.

Behaviour at break and lunchtimes is amazing. Pupils play well together and show genuine kindness to others. Pupils told inspectors that it is 'always nice to be kind'. Bullying is incredibly rare, and teachers act swiftly if there is any unkindness. Pupils' behaviour and attitudes are a strength of the school.

Relationships with parents are strong. Parents speak positively about the improvements they can see. They make comments such as 'super happy with the progress my child is making now'.

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

Strong leadership has transformed the quality of education at the school. The staff team are deeply committed to the shared vision. They ensure that pupils 'learn, grow and succeed together'.

Leaders have put in place a carefully planned and well-sequenced curriculum. Detailed plans show how the new things pupils learn build on what they already know and can do. The 'crucial knowledge' that pupils learn helps them make strong progress in every subject. Teachers provide regular opportunities for pupils to recap and show what they know. For example, in the early years, pupils use the sounds they have learned when reading and writing independently. The curriculum is ambitious, and expectations of what pupils can do have been raised significantly.

Leaders rightly prioritise the development of reading. Teachers use a consistent approach to teach phonics from the early years. Teachers identify quickly those pupils who need help to keep up with their reading. Well-trained adults work with small groups and individual pupils to ensure that they make swift progress. Pupils have frequent opportunities to read. The youngest children start each day sharing stories with each other. Nursery children talked excitedly about the Gruffalo who met a mouse. Pupils' confidence in their ability to read is evident, as is their love of reading.

Leaders implement their plans well in almost all subjects. The implementation of plans in some subjects has been delayed due to the impact of COVID-19 (coronavirus). Pupils struggle in some lessons where they come across new content that they have not been taught before. Leaders review these plans to address gaps in pupils' knowledge. A revised approach to the early years curriculum is beginning to have a positive impact on the progress the youngest pupils make. Staff now know what they want pupils to learn so that they are ready for Year 1. For example, physical education lessons help Reception children develop the agility, balance and coordination they need to be successful in later learning.

The special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) knows exactly what each pupil can do. Pupil passports set clear targets for individual pupils who need help. Teachers make sure that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) get the right support at the right time. As a consequence, pupils with SEND make good progress.

Pupils' conduct is of the highest standard. They are very polite and extremely respectful towards each other and visitors. The school is a calm oasis of learning. Pupils volunteer for jobs such as helping at lunchtime. They write postcards to the elderly in the community and take part in an annual litter pick. Leaders ensure that pupils understand fundamental British values and how to be a good citizen.

There is a strong committed staff team. Staff in the early years, for example, say that they now feel part of the school. Staff speak highly of the way leaders support them to improve their skills and subject knowledge. Leaders carefully consider the workload and well-being of individual staff.

Trustees and governors work together to ensure that pupils get the best possible deal. They know the school and the community it serves very well. Governors provide effective support and challenge. They understand the challenges that leaders face but do not let this get in the way of the aspirations they have for all pupils.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders, staff and governors place a high importance on keeping pupils safe. It is central to their work. The carefully planned curriculum provides many opportunities for pupils to learn how to keep themselves safe, including when working online. Staff are well trained and alert to any signs that pupils are at risk of harm. Systems for keeping pupils safe are robust. Leaders act swiftly when concerns are reported. They work closely with external agencies to ensure children and their families get the support that they need. Designated safeguarding leaders maintain very positive relationships with the most vulnerable families.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have taken effective steps to develop and implement a well-sequenced, coherent curriculum. However, some subjects are at an early stage of being embedded due to COVID-19. Leaders should continue to develop and embed the curriculum in subjects such as art, design technology and music. They should ensure that pupils acquire the 'crucial knowledge' needed for the next stage of their education.
- Recent improvements in the early years are having a significant impact on the start young children get to their education. Children make strong progress in their language and communication skills and personal development. Leaders have developed a curriculum to provide a seamless transition into Year 1 and beyond. Leaders should continue to embed these changes and further develop the early years curriculum and pedagogy so that it is fully designed to give children the knowledge, self-belief and cultural capital they need to move successfully into key stage 1.

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 Ofsted Parent View information 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 [here](#).

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	143345
Local authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	10184727
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	135
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Sarah Gribbin
Headteacher	Stella Formosa
Website	www.chestertonprimary.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	10–11 September 2019 under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Information about this school

- Chesterton Primary School is part of the Collective Vision Trust. The trust is responsible for the management and oversight of three primary schools and one secondary school. There is a local governing committee for this school who report back to the trust board.
- Early years provision comprises a pre-nursery class for two-year-old children who attend in the morning or the afternoon; a Nursery class for three-year-olds who attend part time; and one Reception class for four- and five-year-olds who attend full time.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We deemed the inspection a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation.

In accordance with section 13(5) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement.

- During the inspection, inspectors observed teaching in all year groups. They focused on the following subjects: reading, mathematics and physical education. Inspectors examined leaders' plans, visited lessons, looked at pupils' work and talked with pupils and staff about the way these subjects are taught. They also looked at other subjects to check how they are planned and taught.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of school documents during the inspection. These included information for behaviour, attendance, the school curriculum and improvement planning. The school website was also scrutinised.
- Inspectors talked to leaders and staff about safeguarding arrangements. They looked at child protection policies and safeguarding records. Inspectors checked that all the appropriate pre-employment checks are made on staff before they start work at the school.
- Inspectors talked with pupils informally in lessons, at breaktimes, visited the dining hall at lunchtime and observed pupils' movement around the school. Formal meetings also took place with two groups of pupils.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, the SENCo, subject leaders, teachers and teaching assistants. Inspectors met with the Chief Executive Officer of the trust and two governors, including the chair of the governing body.
- Inspectors spoke with parents at the end of the first day and the beginning of the second day of the inspection. Inspectors considered the 27 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and the 14 responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Nicola Harwood, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Emma Gater

Her Majesty's Inspector

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