

Inspection of a good school: Church Hill Church of England Junior School

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

Inspection dates:

11 and 12 January 2022

Outcome

Church Hill Church of England Junior School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils at Church Hill Junior School are encouraged to 'let your light shine'. They are taught about how to become caring, responsible and respectful members of their school community. Leaders have high expectations of what they can achieve, both academically and personally. The result is a happy, calm and purposeful learning environment where pupils flourish.

Pupils love coming to school. They think that their school is the best school. They say that their teachers are fun and kind. They say that they feel safe at school. Every child is confident that the grown-ups in school will help them if they have a problem.

Pupils love the house system that leaders have developed to reward good behaviour and hard work. Every pupil is proud of the house they belong to and love the healthy competition to be the winning house. Pupils' behaviour is exemplary as they work and play together.

Staff and parents and carers agree that Church Hill Junior School is a school that puts its pupils first. Staff say that Church Hill is like a second family. Parents are positive about the work of the school. One parent said: 'They are always there for us.'

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

The school's curriculum is broad and ambitious for all pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Curriculum plans have been written for all subjects. These plans identify the key knowledge that pupils need to know and remember. Curriculum leaders have made sure that new knowledge builds on prior learning. In a very small number of subjects, plans do not precisely identify the knowledge that pupils need to learn to reach the intended outcomes.

Leaders have developed a systematic approach to the teaching of reading. Staff have received appropriate training. They provide expert support to help pupils become

confident readers. Pupils who need to improve their fluency or ability to read at speed get the help they need. Teachers use a wide range of texts to develop pupils' comprehension skills. There is a focus on vocabulary choices. For example, Year 6 pupils could discuss how an author had successfully dehumanised the characters by using different words. Story time is a daily event. Teachers choose books that will help pupils to understand lives and cultures that are different from their own.

Mathematics is well planned and taught. Subject leaders have developed a 'ping-pong' approach. This is where teachers model new learning, which is followed by opportunities for pupils to practise what they have been taught. Pupils routinely use practical resources to help them with their work. Pupils are highly engaged in their learning and relish challenge.

Teachers regularly assess how well pupils are learning in English, mathematics and science. This is to identify where they may have gaps in their learning. Pupils with SEND are identified quickly and provided with the help they need. However, the school has not yet developed a consistent system for assessing foundation subjects. Leaders know that this should be a priority for the school.

Pupils' personal development is driven by leaders' ambition that pupils will be the very best they can be. The school's charter sets out an exceptionally well-planned range of opportunities for pupils. This includes a visit to the theatre and learning basic first aid. Pupils also participate in a wide range of sports. They learn how to manage finances and are proud of the work they do to raise money for charity. Teachers use the outdoors to inspire pupils to learn. For example, Year 5 pupils made a visit to a fox's den on the school site linked to their class text, 'Little foxes' by Michael Morpurgo.

Governors, staff and pupils speak highly of everything the school has achieved. They have worked closely together through the challenges presented by the pandemic. Staff say that leaders care about their well-being and do all they can to make sure their workload is acceptable.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have ensured that there is a strong safeguarding culture in the school. All staff receive the training they need to carry out their responsibilities well. They keep a close eye on pupils. They pass their concerns on quickly and know that even small concerns should be noted. Safeguarding leads make sure that concerns are followed up. External support is provided for pupils and families who need additional help.

Pupils learn about how to keep themselves safe through the school's curriculum and assemblies. For example, they learn about how to keep themselves safe online and what makes a healthy relationship.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a very small number of subjects, leaders have not ensured that curriculum plans break down the key knowledge that pupils need to learn. In these subjects, teachers have to work out for themselves what pupils need to know in order to reach the end-points that are outlined. Leaders should ensure that all curriculum plans consistently include precise information about what teachers want pupils to learn.
- In the foundation subjects, there is no consistent approach to how teachers assess what pupils learn. This means that teachers are not systematically identifying where pupils may have gaps in their learning. Leaders should ensure that an efficient assessment approach is developed that will enable teachers to have a precise picture of what pupils have learned.

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 a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in December 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	138930
Local authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	10211627
Type of school	Junior
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	7 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	299
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Reverend Timothy Day
Headteacher	Diane Brown
Website	www.churchhill-jun.leics.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	7 and 8 December 2016, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Church Hill Church of England Junior School is a voluntary controlled school in the Diocese of Leicester.
- The most recent Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) section 48 inspection took place in November 2016.
- Since the previous inspection, a new headteacher and deputy headteacher have been appointed.
- The chair of governors was appointed in 2018.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

This was the first routine inspection the school had received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders, and has taken that into consideration in her evaluation of the school.

- The inspector held meetings with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher and other members of staff. The inspector met with five members of the governing body, including the chair and vice-chair.
- Deep dives in reading, mathematics and physical education were carried out. These included discussions with subject leaders, visits to lessons, speaking to pupils from the lessons visited and a scrutiny of pupils' work. The inspector also listened to pupils reading to a member of staff.
- To inspect safeguarding, the inspector met with the designated safeguarding leads and the leader for pastoral care. The inspector considered the school's recruitment procedures, the school's safeguarding records and checked that staff understood their safeguarding responsibilities.
- The inspector spoke to parents at the start of the school day and considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View and free-text messages. She also reviewed responses to the staff and pupil questionnaires.

Inspection team

Caroline Poole, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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