

Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: St Edward's CofE Academy Cheddleton

Hollow Lane, Cheddleton, Leek, Staffordshire ST13 7HP

Inspection dates:

28 and 29 January 2025

Outcome

Evidence gathered during this ungraded (section 8) inspection suggests that the school's work may have improved significantly across all areas since the previous inspection. The school's next inspection will be a graded inspection.

The headteacher of this school is Sue Machin. This school is part of the Staffordshire University Academies Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), James Capper, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Mary Walker.

What is it like to attend this school?

St Edward's is a school where everyone is 'learning and caring together'. Staff, pupils, parents and carers are all committed to this motto. Staff know the pupils very well both educationally and as individuals. This enables pupils to thrive and achieve exceptionally well in all aspects of school life. Parents agree, with one comment being typical of many when they stated, 'This is a kind, nurturing and wonderful place for pupils to learn.'

The school's values are at the heart of all its work. Wisdom, compassion, respect, courage, perseverance, honesty and responsibility are all celebrated and rewarded. These values set high expectations of all pupils. Pupils rise to these high expectations. They are extremely attentive in class and play co-operatively when outside. They know that adults will support them with any small issues that they might have.

Everyone is a leader at this school. From a very young age pupils learn responsibility. In early years children are 'safety monitors', ensuring chairs are neatly under tables. By the time pupils are in Year 4 they are ready to take on whole school roles such as pupil council, subject ambassadors or looking after the school's guinea pigs and tortoises.

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

Since the previous inspection, the school has worked tirelessly to further improve all aspects of its provision. The school's curriculum is particularly well designed. It has set out the important knowledge and vocabulary it wants pupils to know and remember. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), build a secure knowledge of the curriculum progressively from the early years onwards. For example, in mathematics Year 2 pupils learn how to make arrays. In Year 4 they can then confidently use arrays to solve three number multiplication problems.

Staff deliver the curriculum with precision. They focus on the 'sticky knowledge' that they expect pupils to learn. Staff regularly check that pupils have learned this expected knowledge in lessons. Consequently, pupils develop rich and deep knowledge. They learn exceptionally well across all areas of the curriculum. Links made across the curriculum ensure this. For example, pupils in Years 1 and 2 learn about the city of London in geography. They then reinforce this knowledge by making a skyline silhouette of the city in art which contains important buildings in the city.

Pupils achieve particularly well in phonics. Phonics outcomes are impressive. In the early years children quickly learn letter sounds and use them in their writing. Pupils read books which are closely matched to their phonic abilities. Staff provide older readers who need further practise with extra support in their reading. Pupils become fluent readers. They develop a love of reading as a result of the school's engaging curriculum. Staff read books to pupils which link to subjects studied. Pupils enjoy visiting their school library. They relish choosing from the wide selection of texts. Many of these reflect the diversity of different communities and cultures.

The school's inclusive approach supports pupils with SEND to achieve well. Their precise needs are identified early. Pupils with SEND learn alongside their peers and access the same rich curriculum. Staff remove any possible barriers to their learning. For example, pupils use QR codes to enable them to record video explanations of their learning in history. Every pupil has a 'personal opportunities to progress' pack to support them in class.

Pupils behave well in lessons. No learning time is lost. Pupils learn to behave well from the early years. A small number of pupils find managing their behaviour is a challenge. Effective support is put in place for these pupils. As a result, their behaviour improves greatly. Pupils love attending school. The school closely tracks pupil attendance. It provides support for families whose child's attendance declines quickly.

Personal development opportunities are carefully threaded across the curriculum. The school has a 'spotlight on diversity'. It makes sure that pupils understand the rich cultural and religious diversity in modern Britain. Pupils' 'personal development passports' widen opportunities and experiences further. For example, pupils visit a city, complete charitable acts or conduct interviews. Pupils share, discuss and debate during 'reflection time'. The school widens pupils' interests and talents through clubs such as photography, gardening, songbirds and forestry. Pupils are well prepared for later life as a result.

The trust and local academy council want nothing but the very best for pupils. They work well together with leaders in ensuring that the school continues to flourish. Staff feel especially well supported. They know leaders care about their workload and well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Background

Until September 2024, on a graded (section 5) inspection we gave schools an overall effectiveness grade, in addition to the key and provision judgements. Overall effectiveness grades given before September 2024 will continue to be visible on school inspection reports and on Ofsted's website. From September 2024 graded inspections will not include an overall effectiveness grade. This school was, before September 2024, judged to be good for its overall effectiveness.

We have now inspected the school to determine whether it has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at that previous inspection. 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's work has improved significantly or that it may not be as strong as it was at the last inspection, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection. A graded inspection 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 predecessor school, St Edwards CofE (C) First School, to be good for overall effectiveness in September 2013.

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

Unique reference number	143805
Local authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	10344122
Type of school	First
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	208
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Mary Walker
CEO of the trust	James Capper
Principal	Sue Machin
Website	www.stedwardscheddleton.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	22 and 23 October 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.
- The school operates a before and after-school club.
- The school is part of the Staffordshire University Academies Trust, which consists of 21 schools.
- The school is a Church of England school, within the Diocese of Lichfield. Its latest section 48 inspection was in January 2020.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school's education provision.

- The inspector discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- During the inspection, the inspector held meetings with the principal, deputy principal, subject leaders, groups of staff and pupils.
- The inspector met with members of the trust and local academy council, including the chair of the trust. The inspector held a meeting with the CEO and deputy CEO of the trust.
- 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 visited a sample of lessons, spoke with pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The inspector also spoke to pupils about their work.
- The inspector heard pupils in key stage two read.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around school.
- The inspector considered the responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View. He also took into consideration the online staff survey. The inspector spoke to parents at the beginning of the school day.

Inspection team

Barry Yeadsley, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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