

Inspection of a good school: Castlefields Primary School

Castlefields, Bridgnorth, Shropshire WV16 5DQ

Inspection dates:

8 and 9 February 2022

Outcome

Castlefields Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils thrive at Castlefields Primary school. They enjoy school and attend regularly. No groups of pupils are disadvantaged by low attendance. The school's learning environment is inviting. Pupils frequently use the well-stocked library. Reading for enjoyment is embedded in the school. Pupils value the stories that teachers read to them.

Pupils work hard and achieve well because leaders have high expectations of pupils' learning and behaviour. Teachers think carefully about what they teach and when so that learning builds on what pupils can do. This helps pupils remember most of their learning.

Pupils are happy and polite. They behave well and say bullying does not happen very often. If bullying does occur, it is dealt with effectively by staff. Staff help pupils to repair relationships with their friends. Pupils appreciate this. Playtimes are calm. There are lots of activities for pupils to do to keep them busy, for example reading, constructing and building, football, tennis and skipping.

Pupils are proud of their school and the local community. They learn in detail about Bridgnorth and its history. Pupils shared the history of Bridgnorth Castle and changes to the town over time. They feel invested in the town and its community.

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

The headteacher has driven improvements across the curriculum since her appointment in September 2020. She has carefully managed change to ensure staff support her on that journey. She has won hearts and minds.

All staff have high expectations of what pupils can achieve. Staff complete regular training. They have strong subject knowledge. The school's curriculum is broad and balanced. Subject leaders are skilled in leading their curriculum areas. Learning is clearly organised and sequenced so it builds on what pupils already know and can do. However, in a few subjects, leaders have not clearly identified the most important knowledge that

pupils should remember. Therefore, sometimes pupils do not remember the specific key knowledge that leaders want them to.

Teachers ensure that children love to read as soon as they start in early years. Children listen to daily stories and enthusiastically join in with the retelling. Children make a quick start learning to read. The teaching of phonics is consistent. Children can use what they have learned to read simple sentences. Effective support is in place for any pupil who needs to catch up.

Pupils achieve well in mathematics because it is well taught. Teachers use a range of resources and methods to help pupils remember their learning. Activities such as quizzes check pupils' recall and help teachers identify those pupils who may need additional support. Pupils confidently use equipment to support their learning, for example counters, cubes and times tables grids.

In other subjects, well-thought-out provision helps pupils remember their learning in different ways. For example, history timelines are displayed in classrooms to help pupils remember learning about the past. In the Reception class they sing and play games. This helps children with their counting. For example, a child started singing 'One, two, three, four, five, once I caught a fish alive' when counting cubes.

Teachers expect pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to achieve highly. The special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) ensures pupils with SEND are identified early and accurately. Provision is well planned to ensure that these pupils achieve well. This is an inclusive school. All children have started learning Makaton in Reception. This is continuing as the pupils move through the school.

Leaders have thought carefully about how the curriculum supports pupils' wider development. In art, for example, pupils learn about a diverse range of artists, from a range of backgrounds. Pupils are respectful of other faiths and cultures. They know about different faiths they have studied. Pupils understand about equality and accept and value others' differences. One pupil said, 'Equality is about being treated the same. We are all human and we are all just as great as each other.'

Leaders consider the well-being and workload of staff. Staff appreciate the time leaders take to check in on them. Staff feel well supported as they are given time to complete tasks.

Governors provide effective challenge and fulfil their roles and responsibilities well. Governors know the strengths and weaknesses of the quality of education. They work closely with the trust to monitor leaders' work on curriculum development.

Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the school. They celebrate the school's 'family feel'. A typical comment from parents was, 'Castlefields truly is a wonderful school that looks after the whole child.'

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders know the pupils, their families and the school's context well. Staff are well trained to spot signs of potential abuse and know how to record their concerns. Leaders maintain detailed records. Leaders work with a broad range of agencies to ensure families are supported.

Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe, including online. Leaders provide helpful advice to pupils and their parents about how to keep safe when using the internet and mobile technology.

Leaders make sure the appropriate pre-employment checks are carried out before staff work with pupils.

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 defined the essential knowledge that they want pupils to learn. Consequently, pupils do not learn as well as they should. Leaders should make sure that they identify the important knowledge they want pupils to learn in these subjects.

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 as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the predecessor school, Castlefields Primary School, to be good in November 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.

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	145202
Local authority	Shropshire
Inspection number	10212338
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	235
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Vince Pizzoni
Headteacher	Rebecca Lee
Website	www.castlefieldsprimary.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school converted to become an academy school in November 2017.
- The school is a member of the TrustEd Schools' Partnership.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- There is a breakfast and after-school club that is run by the school.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, the SENCo and other members of staff.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, the inspector discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- The inspector met with the designated safeguarding lead and checked safeguarding documents, including the checks made on staff. They also examined documentation relating to pupils' attendance and behaviour.
- The inspector considered the responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View, and the views of staff recorded in Ofsted's online survey.
- The inspector also spoke with pupils informally during the school day, including at before- and after-school clubs.
- The inspector met remotely with three members of the governing body, two trustees and the chief executive officer of the TrustEd Schools' Partnership.

Inspection team

Eve Morris, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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