

# Inspection of a good school: Christ Church Academy

Old Road, Stone, Staffordshire, ST15 8JD

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Inspection dates:

26 and 27 January 2022

## **Outcome**

Christ Church Academy continues to be a good school.

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils at Christ Church thrive. Staff promote the Christian values of forgiveness, friendship, compassion, trust, and thankfulness effectively in all aspects of school life. As a result, the relationships between adults and pupils are respectful. Pupils are happy and enjoy their learning.

The school is calm and orderly. Behaviour in lessons and around the school is good. On the odd times that behaviour interrupts learning, pupils say that there is a fair system in place that deals with it effectively. Bullying is rare and staff deal well with any that does happen.

Leaders have high aspirations for what pupils can achieve. Pupils are taught mainly by specialist teachers. As a result, they achieve well in lessons.

A strength of the school is how it supports pupils to become responsible, active citizens who contribute to society. Pupils can take on a variety of roles and responsibilities in school, such as peer mentor, sports leader, librarian, or worship leader. Pupils support events in the local community such as 'Stone Rocks' and collect litter in the local area.

The school offers several trips and activities to all pupils. This includes trips to France, Westminster, and Cannock Chase. Clubs include choir, mindfulness, Spanish, drama, and sports clubs. Pupils value these experiences.

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

All pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), study a full range of subjects. The curriculum is well planned and sequenced. Subject leaders plan the curriculum with leaders from first schools and a high school. This means that pupils build on what they know year on year. It also prepares pupils in Year 8 well for continuing their secondary education.

Teachers use assessment information effectively to identify gaps in pupils' learning. Teachers use questions in lessons well to check what pupils know and understand. But sometimes teachers miss the chance to use questioning to deepen pupils' knowledge and understanding. Work in books shows that pupils are making progress. Teachers set pupils targets to help them improve their work. When pupils respond to these targets, it leads to improvement in their work. However, sometimes this does not happen. This hinders some pupils' progress.

Leaders give high priority to improve pupils' reading. The library is welcoming. All pupils have a dedicated library lesson. Leaders expect pupils to read every day. Leaders regularly check on pupils' progress in reading. Pupils who need extra help receive it. This includes adults listening to pupils read. As a result, pupils are becoming more confident, fluent readers.

The school provides good care and support for pupils with SEND. All pupils have a pupil passport. The passport provides information about how adults can support pupils in school. This includes how to meet their physical and social needs. However, the information provided is not always precise enough to help adults fully support pupils' learning in lessons. For pupils with an education, health, and care (EHC) plan the information does not always match the targets in their EHC plan well enough. This means that some pupils with SEND are not achieving as well as they could.

Careers lessons begin for pupils in Year 7. This helps them to choose the right option subjects during Year 8. Pupils are, therefore, well prepared for when they move on to high school.

Leaders provide meaningful experiences for pupils. In 'base time', for example, pupils watch the news and debate current topics. Worship leaders use parables to lead discussions between pupils. These focus on the school's Christian values. This helps to effectively support pupils' spiritual and moral development.

Leaders consider staff workload and staff well-being. Inspectors were told many examples about how leaders had supported staff with both professional and personal issues. Staff value this support.

Trustees and governors are well informed about the school. They provide an appropriate balance of support and challenge for leaders. For example, governors recently challenged leaders on the fairness of the pupils' reward system.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff take pupils' welfare seriously. They report concerns confident in the knowledge that leaders will deal with them quickly and effectively. All staff receive regular and appropriate training.

Leaders work well with external agencies. This means that families get the help they need when they need it. Parents value this support.

Appropriate checks are completed on all adults who work at, or visit, the school.

Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe in personal, social and health education lessons. This includes learning about sexual consent and online safety. As a result, pupils say they feel safe. Parents agree.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- The information provided in pupil passports is not always precise enough to fully support pupils' learning. For pupils with an EHC plan, the information does not consistently align with the targets in their plans. Leaders need to ensure that the information provided in pupil passports is exact enough to support pupils' learning. Leaders need also to monitor routinely and evaluate how well adults are using this information, so that pupils with SEND achieve the best possible outcomes.
- Pupils do not always respond to the feedback given to them to improve their work. This, sometimes, hinders their progress. Leaders should ensure that pupils are consistently acting upon adults' feedback to help pupils achieve their full potential.

## **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 second section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in December 2012.

## **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

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| <b>Unique reference number</b>             | 136961   |
| <b>Local authority</b>                     | Staffordshire  |
| <b>Inspection number</b>                   | 10211431   |
| <b>Type of school</b>                      | Middle deemed secondary  |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                 | 9 to 13  |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                    | Mixed  |
| <b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b> | 553  |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>               | Board of trustees  |
| <b>Chair of trust</b>                      | Gill Latos   |
| <b>Principal</b>                           | Chris Wright   |
| <b>Website</b>                             | <a href="http://www.christchurchacademy.co.uk">www.christchurchacademy.co.uk</a> |
| <b>Date of previous inspection</b>         | 15 February 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005                      |

## Information about this school

- Since the previous inspection, there have been significant changes to the senior leadership team. In 2018, a new vice principal and new assistant principal were appointed. In 2021, a further new assistant principal was appointed. In the same year, a new post was created and appointed to, that of associate assistant principal.
- A SIAMS inspection to evaluate the distinctiveness and effectiveness of the school as a Church of England school took place in January 2020. The next inspection is due in five years.
- The school does not use alternative provision.

## Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since COVID-19 began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and have taken this into account in their evaluation.
- The inspectors met with the principal, other senior leaders, staff, members of the governing body, including the chair, and trustees, including the chair. The lead inspector also spoke to a representative of the diocese on the telephone.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in English, mathematics, and modern foreign languages. For each deep dive, inspectors 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 lead inspector talked to pupils at unstructured times during the day.
- Inspectors evaluated a range of school documents and looked at information on the school's website.
- The lead inspector checked the single central record and the procedures for the recruitment of staff. She also met with the school's designated safeguarding lead.
- The lead inspector reviewed the responses to Ofsted's staff survey and considered the responses to the online questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View, including free-text responses.

### **Inspection team**

Lesley Yates, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Mike Onyon

Ofsted Inspector

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