

# Inspection of a good school: St Matthew's Church of England Aided Primary School and Nursery Centre

Church Road, Donnington Wood, Telford, Shropshire TF2 7PZ

---

Inspection dates:

4–5 February 2020

## Outcome

St Matthew's Church of England Aided Primary School and Nursery Centre continues to be a good school.

## What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy coming to school because they like the exciting lessons. Teachers provide opportunities to bring learning to life, for example by re-enacting a battle between the Romans and the Celts outside in the woods. Well-chosen visits enhance pupils' learning. These include visits to museums and art galleries.

Pupils behave well. Classrooms are calm, so pupils can get on with their learning. Pupils move around the school sensibly. They play well together on the playground. Pupils told us they are safe at school. They told us that there is very little bullying and that if there were any, an adult would deal with it. Leaders ensure that the site is as secure as possible.

Leaders have introduced the 'three Rs'. These are respect, responsibility and resilience. Pupils know that the three Rs are important in all parts of their everyday lives. Teachers celebrate pupils' hard work. Displays around school are bright and stimulating. These fire pupils' imagination and encourage them to do their best.

Leaders, staff and governors share high expectations for all pupils, including those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils who need extra support get the help they need. This means that all pupils achieve well in a wide range of subjects.

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

The curriculum is well structured. The sequence of learning is helping most pupils to know more and remember more in most subjects. This is because learning is carefully sequenced. In foundation subjects, all topics begin with a memorable experience. This brings learning to life for pupils. The curriculum contains several creative topics as a basis.

The carefully structured curriculum helps pupils to become more resilient learners as they progress through school. For example, in history, pupils remember more about Boudicca because of the way in which lessons build on what pupils have learned previously. School leaders have changed the purchased commercial curriculum scheme to make learning more meaningful for pupils.

Leaders' approach to the curriculum helps to improve pupils' vocabulary. Pupils are encouraged to read a wide range of texts to foster a love of reading. Opportunities to extend pupils' understanding of what they have read are a part of many lessons. However, subject-specific vocabulary is not consistently taught well enough to help pupils know and remember more. Subject leaders are always looking to improve further the sequencing of learning. This means that development of the curriculum is ongoing. For example, in history, leaders have plans to ensure that pupils will know and remember more as they move through the school.

The curriculum is enhanced by visits. Pupils go to places of interest that are beyond their normal experience. Pupils recently visited the Walker Art Gallery in Liverpool. While there, they studied the Mona Lisa as part of their art topic. Pupils from Year 2 visited Ludlow Castle. This supported their learning in history.

The first two Rs, respect and responsibility, underpin the curriculum. They help pupils to develop a clear understanding of right and wrong. Pupils make links to decisions made in the past that have had an effect on our lives today.

Children begin learning early reading skills in the final term of Nursery. These skills are further developed in the Reception class. Staff teach phonics well. Reading books are matched to the sounds that pupils already know.

Teachers spot those children who are finding reading a little more difficult. They include those pupils with SEND. They are then given the support they need and catch up. Pupils speak about their favourite authors with passion. One such favourite is Michael Morpurgo. Storytime is fun for all pupils. Teachers enjoy reading to pupils. The canon of books used as class texts consists of a wide range of modern and classic texts. These texts are ambitious and link with the topics that pupils study.

Anti-bullying week helps to give a clear understanding of the different types of bullying. Pupils are taught how to protect their identity online in lessons. Staff provide a vast range of opportunities to support pupils' personal development. Music plays a key part in school life. The talented ukulele band enjoys performing to a range of audiences.

Children make strong progress during their time in early years. The indoor and outdoor classrooms are vibrant and well resourced. Children use these resources well to support their learning. Staff have high expectations of the children. They have planned an ambitious and creative curriculum. Stanley, the toy dog, goes home with children. This helps to get parents and carers and pupils writing together about where he visits. Children are keen to work in the mathematics areas. For example, they try out many different calculations to make the number 10. Lots of visitors, such as police officers,

firefighters and soldiers, come into school. They help to bring learning in early years alive for the children.

Staff workload is well managed by leaders. If staff concerns do arise, leaders do what they can to help. Subject leaders told us that they are given the time they need to make a difference in their subjects.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Stringent checks are carried out on staff before they start work. Records of these checks are well maintained and up to date. Staff and governor training is regular and up to date. Staff know whom they should approach if they have any safeguarding concerns.

There are four designated safeguarding leaders in school. This means that there is always someone available to respond to any concerns about a pupil's welfare.

Governors check that safeguarding requirements are up to date. They discuss safeguarding compliance at each meeting of the full governing body. The children's safeguarding team reports to governors. They share any concerns from pupils.

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

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

- In subjects such as reading and mathematics, most pupils can build on what they have learned. They are able to use their knowledge to help understand new learning. However, leaders do not make sure that all pupils understand the meaning of subject-specific vocabulary in range of subjects. This is because it is not used in lessons consistently to reinforce pupils' understanding. This reduces opportunities for pupils to make links between concepts they have learned. They need this to help them know more and remember more over time. Leaders must ensure that there are more opportunities for pupils to understand and use the words they learn in lessons.
- In some subjects, including history, the curriculum is not planned well enough to enable pupils to know and remember more. This means that some pupils are not achieving as well as they could. Leaders should ensure that all foundation subject plans are well sequenced to help pupils build knowledge as they move through the school.

## Background

When we have judged a school to be good or 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 school or non-exempt outstanding school. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that the school could now be better than good or that standards may be declining, 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 convert the section 8 inspection to a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in July 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 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.

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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	123557
<b>Local authority</b>	Telford & Wrekin
<b>Inspection number</b>	10122604
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Maintained
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	310
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Anna Hill
<b>Headteacher</b>	Kate Clark
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.stmatthewscofe.com">www.stmatthewscofe.com</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	6–7 July 2016

## Information about this school

- The school's most-recent section 48 inspection took place in October 2016. This is an inspection of the school's religious character.

## Information about this inspection

- During the inspection, I spoke with senior leaders, subject leaders, teachers and support staff. I spoke with three members of the governing body. I spoke with pupils informally. I spoke more formally with two small groups.
- I focused specifically on reading, mathematics and history. I also gathered a range of evidence about other aspects of the work of the school. This included plans for improvement, records of governing body meetings and logs of incidents of poor behaviour.
- I scrutinised a range of school documentation relating to the safeguarding of pupils. I scrutinised the single central record of checks that take place before adults begin working at the school.
- I took into account 37 responses to the online survey, Parent View. I considered the text responses provided by parents on Parent View, and I spoke with parents as they

dropped their children off at the start of the school day. I also considered the views staff expressed in the online survey.

### **Inspection team**

Declan McCauley, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/), write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: [psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk).

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates:  
<http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)

© Crown copyright 2020