

Inspection of a good school: St Edward's CofE Academy, Cheddleton

Hollow Lane, Cheddleton, Leek, Staffordshire ST13 7HP

Inspection dates:

22–23 October 2019

Outcome

St Edward's CofE Academy, Cheddleton, continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy coming to this small village school. It gives its pupils a good education and helps them grow as individuals.

Staff at the school are friendly and caring. They encourage pupils to aim high and work hard. Pupils settle in straightaway when they start school. This gets them off to a good start. Leaders, teachers and other staff expect all pupils to do well.

Pupils feel safe in the school. They know who to talk to if they have any difficulties.

Pupils like their lessons. They do enjoy it when they work outside of the classroom, for example in the forest and garden areas. They love challenges, such as 'Mrs Machin's Missions'. These allow them to show how well they can contribute to the school.

Pupils behave very well in lessons and around the school. They are polite and help each other. Unkind behaviour is rare. If it does happen staff deal with it well.

Parents are happy with the subjects taught in the school. Most would recommend this school to others. This includes parents of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Some parents would like more information about what pupils learn and how they do.

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

Leaders are ambitious for pupils in the school. All pupils learn the subjects of the national curriculum.

Pupils learn English and mathematics very well. Leaders are clear about what pupils should learn by the end of each year. Teachers have good subject knowledge. Lessons are very well organised. Well-planned assessments help pupils remember and practise what they learn. Usually, pupils work at, or above, the levels expected for their age.

Pupils also learn well in some of the foundation subjects. In physical education and

history, teachers use good subject knowledge to help pupils do well. Lessons build pupils' knowledge and skills over time. Teachers make links between different subjects. For example, pupils read Wilfred Owen's poetry in history when learning about the First World War. Pupils have plenty of chances to practise what they learn. Most lessons use a 'quality text' to spark interest and widen reading.

Not all foundation subjects are as well organised. In these subjects, pupils do not learn or remember as much as they could. Leaders do not provide enough detail about what pupils should learn. Lessons do not always build on previous work. Assessment is patchy. Pupils do not recall knowledge or practise skills enough. At times, the focus on a 'quality text' obscures the subject content.

In the Nursery and Reception classes, children settle without fuss. They thrive because of very good teaching. Imaginative staff use high-quality resources to teach children well. Staff keep a close eye on how well each child does. All work and play in the early years support children's good levels of development.

Reading is a priority for the school. Pupils learn to read as soon as they arrive. Teachers are knowledgeable and enthusiastic about reading. They give pupils suitable books to read. They encourage all pupils to read often. 'Reading stations' are available around the school. There are interesting books in the garden and forest areas. Pupils who struggle in reading have extra help. This helps them catch up. Pupils do very well in the Year 1 phonics screening check.

The school has a very positive ethos of 'learning and caring together'. It helps pupils to flourish. Life in the school is rarely disrupted by negative behaviour. Assemblies and Christian worship give pupils a sense of belonging.

The school nurtures its pupils and helps them grow as individuals. For example, they take part in a 'democracy week' and enjoy 'diversity days'. Links with local schools, and schools in Kenya, help pupils understand different cultures. Pupils learn about the importance of tolerance and respect. They are eager ambassadors for their school.

Pupils appreciate the many school clubs and activities. These include music, art, forestry and sport. The school choir often performs in public. Sport is a strength of the school. Teams usually win the competitions they enter. Staff encourage all pupils to take part.

Staff meet the needs of different pupils well. Pupils with SEND enjoy extra help. Support for them is good. Like other pupils, they are encouraged to do very well.

Leaders at the school are very effective. They act with integrity. The new principal has the strong support of staff and parents. Most think the school is much better than when it was last inspected. Parents particularly enjoy the 'watch me learn' sessions. Staff believe that leaders help them maintain a healthy work-life balance. Leadership of the early years provision is very good.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders know that the safety of pupils is a key priority. They make sure that staff know what to do if concerns arise about any pupil. Teachers and other staff have regular safeguarding training. This helps them understand the difficulties which their pupils might face.

Leaders think about possible risks to pupils. They carry out all necessary checks before any adults visit or work in school. Staff act without hesitation if any pupil needs protection.

Pupils feel safe in school. They work and play together in safety. They know how to keep themselves safe in ways fitting for their age.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders need to improve the curriculum in foundation subjects. Leaders should develop curriculum plans in all these subjects so that they cover more subject content. They should ensure that plans set out what pupils are expected to learn and by when. All curriculum plans should have enough detail to help teachers build pupils' subject knowledge and embed learning over time.
- Subject leaders should use assessment in the foundation subjects to help pupils remember their learning, including by giving them more opportunities to recall their knowledge and practise skills.
- In lessons, the learning which pupils do around the 'quality text' should focus on specific subject content as well as on reading.

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 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 predecessor school, St Edward's CofE First School, to be good on 17–18 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 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're 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	143805
Local authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	10111727
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	211
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Mary Walker
Principal	Sue Machin
Website	www.stedwardscheddleton.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- This voluntary controlled Church of England school converted to become an academy in January 2017.
- The school is part of Staffordshire University Trust, which includes 13 other schools.
- A local academy council governs the school on behalf of the trust. The trust is led by a chief executive who reports to a board of trustees.
- The school's Christian ethos was last inspected in 2015.

Information about this inspection

- During this inspection, the inspector met with pupils. He spoke to them about their experience of school. He visited all classes to check what pupils were learning, including the Nursery and Reception classes. He observed behaviour in the school. He spoke with staff about the content of the subjects being taught to pupils. He looked at a range of subjects, focusing particularly on reading, mathematics, history and physical education.
- The inspector met with leaders and other staff. He considered a wide range of information about the school, including published test results. He met with members of

the local academy council and with a representative of the trust.

- The inspector spoke to parents at the start and end of the school day. He considered 56 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online parental questionnaire, including 30 written comments. He took account of 10 responses to Ofsted's staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Mike Cladingbowl, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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