

Inspection of St Cuthbert's C of E Junior School

Keward Avenue, Wells, Somerset BA5 1TS

Inspection dates: 26 and 27 September 2023

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| Overall effectiveness | Good |
| The quality of education | Good |
| Behaviour and attitudes | Good |
| Personal development | Good |
| Leadership and management | Good |
| Previous inspection grade | Requires improvement |

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy and safe at St Cuthbert's C of E Junior School. They embrace the school motto, 'Roots to grow, wings to fly'. Staff know pupils and their families well. They take time to build positive relationships with pupils. This creates a learning environment where pupils grow in confidence. Parents praise the care and support staff provide.

Pupils understand the school values and how these help them to be successful learners. They know what is expected of them and they want to do well. Pupils take real pride in their learning.

The school is determined for all pupils to succeed. It has been relentless in improving the quality of education that pupils receive. The school has made improvements to the curriculum that mean pupils now learn with success. As a result, pupils know more and remember more over time.

Pupils enjoy the extra opportunities available to them. They speak fondly of activities such as construction club. Pupils say that clubs help them to relax and try something new. Pupils value the trips they attend to enrich the curriculum further. For example, they visit Somerset Rural Life Museum when learning about the Anglo-Saxons.

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

The school has improved the curriculum to ensure that pupils learn well. Teachers use strategies to help pupils build their knowledge. For example, they use questioning to help pupils deepen their understanding. Assessment is used to check pupils build on what they know and remember. Teachers identify gaps in pupils' knowledge and provide support to those who need it. The development of subject leaders has been integral in identifying and sequencing the essential knowledge they want pupils to learn. However, some teaching does not follow the curriculum as designed by the school. Where this happens, pupils do not learn the curriculum as well. The school is aware of this issue through its monitoring. However, the school has not yet taken swift action to ensure pupils learn well across all subjects.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are included in all aspects of school life. The school ensures that these pupils and their needs are identified promptly. Teachers adapt learning to help pupils with SEND learn well alongside their peers.

The school promotes a culture of reading. Texts are carefully selected to build pupils' knowledge of different genres. These texts also help develop pupils' understanding of different cultures and diversity. Pupils enjoy reading and sharing their favourite books with each other. The school checks how well pupils can read on entry to the school. Extra support is provided for those who need it. This helps most pupils who have not yet grasped the basics of reading to catch up. However, a small group of pupils do not get the individual support they need. Gaps in their phonics code are

not addressed quickly enough to develop their reading knowledge securely. Consequently, these pupils find it harder to access the curriculum.

Staff have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. As a result, pupils behave well and respect each other. They show positive attitudes to learning and conduct themselves well around the school. As a result, the school is calm and orderly.

The school provides a wide range of opportunities to enhance pupils' personal development. Pupil voice is integral to the life of the school. Pupils know that their views matter and they make a difference. For example, 'mini police' are leadership positions that pupils apply for to promote personal safety for their peers. The personal, social and health education curriculum is enhanced by assemblies to reinforce important values. As a result, pupils are responsible and respectful citizens.

Governors are ambitious for pupils to do well. They receive the training they need to fulfil their role effectively. As a result, governors have an accurate understanding of the school's current strengths and areas for further development. All staff are proud to work at the school. There is a culture of support in place for all staff so they feel valued and cared for.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- A small minority of pupils at the early stages of learning to read are not supported as well as they could be to grasp the basics in reading. Consequently, these pupils are not becoming confident, fluent readers quickly enough. The school must ensure that these pupils get the support they need to learn to read successfully.
- The designed curriculum is not followed well enough in some areas. As a result, pupils do not build their knowledge as well across the curriculum. The school needs to ensure that the intended curriculum is fully implemented effectively.

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

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| Unique reference number | 123777 |
| Local authority | Somerset |
| Inspection number | 10284083 |
| Type of school | Junior |
| School category | Voluntary controlled |
| Age range of pupils | 7 to 11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 168 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair of governing body | Philip Michael |
| Headteacher | Helen Mullinger |
| Website | www.stcuthbertsjuniorswells.co.uk |
| Date of previous inspection | 19 May 2021, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 |

Information about this school

- The school is designated as having a religious character. The school is in the Diocese of Bath and Wells. At the most recent section 48 inspection of the school, carried out in March 2023, the school was judged to be good.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- The school provides a before-school club.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspectors spoke with school leaders, subject leaders, parents, pupils, governors and representatives from the trust.

- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and geography. For each deep dive, the 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. Inspectors also spoke to leaders and pupils about the curriculum in some other subjects.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: 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 lead inspector listened to pupils read to a trusted adult.
- The inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school site. Additionally, the inspectors spoke to pupils to discuss their views about the school.
- The inspectors considered responses to Ofsted Parent View, Ofsted's online survey for parents. The inspectors considered comments made by parents online during the inspection and met with some parents at the start of the second day. Inspectors also considered responses to Ofsted's online surveys for pupils and staff.

Inspection team

Esther Best, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Andrew Lovett

Ofsted Inspector

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