

Inspection of a good school: Tilston Parochial CofE Primary School

Church Road, Tilston, Malpas, Cheshire SY14 7HB

Inspection date: 19 October 2022

Outcome

Tilston Parochial CofE Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school

Pupils run into school with smiles on their faces at the start of the day. They are happy and they feel safe in school. Pupils, including those in the early years, care about each other and make friends easily.

Pupils said that they all know each other well and that they feel like a big family. Pupils behave well. If bullying occurs, pupils are confident that staff would soon put a stop to it. Pupils new to the school receive a warm welcome. This helps them to settle in quickly and to feel at home.

Leaders and staff are determined that all pupils and children will succeed, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Relationships between staff and pupils are respectful. Pupils show consideration for each other.

During lessons, pupils try hard to live up to their teachers' high expectations for both their behaviour and for what they can achieve academically. Pupils enjoy their learning and achieve well.

Pupils value the many ways that they can contribute to the life of the school, for example as Reception buddies and anti-bullying ambassadors. There are many opportunities for pupils to participate in clubs and activities. Staff encourage all pupils to participate in these activities, including pupils with SEND.

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

Leaders have designed an effective and ambitious curriculum. They have carefully considered what they want pupils to learn. The curriculum is organised so that teachers are clear about the knowledge, skills and vocabulary that pupils must learn and the order in which this content should be taught. Leaders ensure that, right from the early years, learning builds securely on what pupils know and can do. This helps pupils to achieve well across the curriculum.

Leaders have made reading a high priority. They ensure that pupils have plenty of high-quality books to read, both in the school library and in classroom reading areas. Pupils enjoy listening to the stories that staff read to them. They also like to read on their own for pleasure.

Leaders have prioritised the teaching of phonics. Staff are experts in teaching pupils to learn to read. The teaching of phonics starts in the early years. Pupils read books that are closely matched to the sounds they know. Staff use every opportunity to develop pupils' language skills. They understand how to support those pupils who struggle to read. Leaders ensure that those pupils who need help to catch up receive support quickly. Pupils learn to read well, including those with SEND.

Staff have secure subject knowledge. They have accessed a wide range of subject-specific training to keep their skills up to date. Leaders monitor how successfully the curriculum is being implemented across the school. They adjust the curriculum when necessary to ensure the needs of all pupils are met. In some subjects, there are highly effective assessment systems in place to check pupils' understanding of key building blocks as they learn and remember more of the curriculum. However, in a few subjects these strategies are at an earlier stage of development.

Leaders and staff work together to quickly identify any pupils who may have SEND. These pupils receive effective support to enable them to access the curriculum and learn successfully.

Pupils' attitudes to learning are very positive and poor behaviour rarely disrupts learning. They focus well on their learning and take pride in their work. Positive relationships between pupils and staff create a settled and calm environment.

Leaders ensure that pupils learn about important values such as democracy and tolerance. They have created a culture where pupils learn about other faiths and communities. Pupils enjoy applying for leadership roles in the school. For example, they learn to take on responsibilities when they become librarians or members of the school committee. All of these experiences help to support pupils' wider development.

Governors are highly committed to the school. They ask leaders challenging questions about all aspects of their work but have a particular focus on the quality of education. Staff, along with parents and carers, hold leaders and staff in high regard. Leaders prioritise staff workload and well-being. Staff feel extremely well supported by leaders.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and governors ensure that all staff receive regular safeguarding training. Staff know how to recognise the signs of abuse and neglect. They act quickly to report concerns about pupils' well-being or safety.

Leaders make prompt referrals to safeguarding partners. They communicate effectively with a range of professionals to understand pupils' needs and circumstances. This enables pupils and their families to access well-targeted support when it is needed.

Through the curriculum, pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe, for example, when they are using the internet. Pupils learn about the risks of sharing their personal information and what to do if they see something that makes them uncomfortable.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a few subjects, leaders' strategies in place to check on pupils' learning are at an earlier stage of development. This means that, on occasion, teachers are not able to ensure that pupils are acquiring a secure-enough knowledge of some aspects of the curriculum. Leaders should ensure that assessment strategies in these subjects identify any gaps in pupils' knowledge and provide teachers with an accurate understanding of how well pupils have learned what was intended.

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 an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in March 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.

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	111284
Local authority	Cheshire West and Chester
Inspection number	10240774
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	113
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Kay Dutton
Headteacher	Kelsey Mort
Website	www.tilston.cheshire.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	11 July 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is a voluntary-aided Church of England school. The school's last section 48 inspection was carried out in May 2017.
- A new headteacher has been appointed since the previous inspection.
- A new chair of governors has been appointed since the previous inspection.
- Leaders do not make use of any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher and other leaders.
- The lead inspector also met with members of the governing body, including the chair of governors.
- The lead inspector had a telephone conversation with a representative from the local authority and a representative from the diocese.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and geography. For each deep dive inspectors met with subject leaders, discussed the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors also discussed the curriculum in some other subjects with leaders.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documentation about safeguarding. Inspectors also spoke with staff to understand how they keep pupils safe.
- Inspectors considered the views expressed by parents in their responses to Ofsted Parent View. This included free-text comments. Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's online surveys for staff and for pupils. Inspectors also spoke with some pupils about school life.
- Inspectors spoke with staff to discuss leaders' support for their workload and well-being.

Inspection team

Julie Barlow, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Deborah Bailey

Ofsted Inspector

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