

Inspection of a good school: Morpeth All Saints Church of England Aided First School

Pinewood Drive, Lancaster Park, Morpeth, Northumberland, NE61 3RD

Inspection dates:

5 and 6 July 2022

Outcome

Morpeth All Saints Church of England Aided First School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils' attitudes to school reflects its strong Christian ethos. Pupils know and understand the importance of showing the school's values of joy, love, hope, honesty and thankfulness. They say that is why the school 'is a lovely place to be.' Pupils work hard because teachers expect them to. It is also because they want to succeed. Pupils take notice of the display in school which celebrates well-known figures, who achieved success against the odds.

Bullying is rare. Pupils try to resolve situations themselves if friends fall out. Behaviour in and around school is good. Courtesy and good manners are commonplace. Pupils use the 'thrive room' with an adult to understand and deal with their feelings. The 'wellbeing board' explains what it means to be happy, sad, angry or anxious in pupils' own words. Pupils are safe in school and learn how to stay safe out of school from learning in assemblies and dedicated lessons.

Of all the aspects of school, the favourite for pupils is the outdoor learning area. Pupils make bird feeders from string, twigs and breakfast cereal rings. They build dens, watch for birds and insects and construct a 'castle', complete with a protective ditch.

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

Leaders have adopted a new approach to teaching phonics. It is rapidly bearing fruit. Teachers follow the phonics programme systematically. Children in Reception know how to 'chunk' harder words in order to read them. They read words like 'farmyard' and 'wooden' with ease. Key stage 1 pupils read many words by sight. They use their phonics knowledge to successfully read words that they do not know. Teachers use assessment well to spot gaps in phonics knowledge. They have successfully addressed the gaps in pupils' phonics knowledge caused by the pandemic. Reading remains a priority for leaders. Pupils enjoy storytelling week and working virtually with local authors and

journalists. Training for teachers and teaching assistants is of good quality. The English leader helps teachers by providing extra support and coaching. By the end of Year 1 most pupils read with confidence.

Leaders have ensured that the sequencing of lessons in most subjects is of good quality. Key ideas weave through lessons, helping pupils to link new learning to what they know already. Lessons start with a recap of previous learning. This helps pupils remember more over time. Teachers use assessment well to let pupils know how well they have done. Teachers use assessment information to plan pupils' future learning. Good use is made of different practical resources to support pupils' understanding of abstract concepts. This captures pupils' imagination and enthuses pupils to learn more.

Pupils try their best. In Nursery and Reception, children play and learn together happily. The inspector saw children helping each other to measure the height of a knight using conkers as units of measurement. Older pupils show determination in trying to explain the reason why a mathematics problem is correct or incorrect. There is very little low-level disruption in lessons. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) learn alongside their classmates. Teachers make small changes in lessons, so pupils with SEND access the work. These can be the way pupils record work or having a list of essential vocabulary as well as many other types of extra support.

Leaders provide many different opportunities that help pupils grow into 'well-rounded, good people' as defined by a senior leader. Pupils can join the 'eco-committee', carrying out jobs like picking litter to improve the environment. The school council organises events, such as the Jubilee party or the talent show. Charity days inform pupils of others' needs as well as being fun. Visits have resumed to enrich pupils' learning, such as to a living history museum or a Roman fort. The school has links with a school in Nepal. There is an annual 'inter-faith' week and pupils visit local places of worship.

Most staff feel valued and supported by leaders. Teachers appreciate recent changes to reduce their workload. These include revisions to lesson planning and more time out of class for subject leaders to develop their curriculum. Governors and leaders know that they must continue to provide this extra support, so that the morale of all members of staff is high.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Safeguarding training for staff and governors is thorough. Staff record all minor issues, so any patterns in pupils' behaviour is identified at an early stage. This builds a chronology of issues. Keeping safeguarding at the forefront of all staff minds is a priority for leaders. Leaders provide regular updates and briefings in staff meetings.

Teachers know how to raise their concerns. All staff know the whistle-blowing policy. The safeguarding governor checks all safeguarding records each term. Risk assessments are in place for school activities. Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe, including online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- A small number of foundation subjects are not sufficiently well planned. New learning does not build on what pupils already know. As a result, pupils do not remember their new knowledge. Leaders must ensure that all curriculum areas are carefully planned and sequenced. This will help pupils transfer knowledge to long term memory, so that they know and remember more in every subject.

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 November 2011.

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

Unique reference number	122297
Local authority	Northumberland
Inspection number	10227038
Type of school	First
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3 to 9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	239
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Sarah Alexander
Headteacher	Nicholas Reeson
Website	www.morpethallsaints.com
Date of previous inspection	14 March 2017

Information about this school

- Morpeth All Saints Church of England Aided First School is a voluntary aided school.
- The school's religious character is Christian. The school is part of the diocese of Durham and Newcastle. The last section 48 inspection took place in February 2017.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school leaders and has taken that into account in his evaluation of the school.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, acting deputy headteacher, the special educational needs coordinator, teachers and the school business manager. The inspector met four members of the governing body, including

the chair. The inspector also held a telephone conversation with the school improvement partner who is also the diocesan representative.

- Deep dives were carried out in reading, geography and mathematics. For each deep dive, the inspector met with leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers and teaching assistants, spoke to pupils and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspector listened to a range of pupils read from different year groups.
- The inspector looked at curriculum plans and spoke to leaders about other curriculum subjects.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour during lesson visits, at break time and at lunchtime. The inspector spoke to pupils about their views of behaviour. A group of pupils gave the inspector a tour of the school.
- The inspector looked at the single central record of recruitment and vetting checks and spoke to leaders, teachers and pupils about safeguarding.
- The views of parents who responded to Ofsted's questionnaire, Parent View were considered.
- The inspector met with staff to discuss their well-being and workload. The inspector considered the responses and comments from Ofsted's staff survey.

Inspection team

Phil Scott, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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