

Inspection of High Bickington Church of England Primary Academy

High Bickington, Umberleigh, Devon EX37 9AY

Inspection dates: 20 and 21 October 2021

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Early years provision **Good**

Previous inspection grade Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

What is it like to attend this school?

Strong Christian values underpin daily life at High Bickington school. Pupils are encouraged to 'let your light shine' and make a difference to the school, village and wider world around them. Pupils enjoy coming to school. They feel safe and attend regularly. Parents praise the high levels of care and support their child receives.

Leaders are determined that all pupils will succeed. The school's ambitious curriculum inspires pupils to rise to leaders' high expectations. Consequently, pupils' attitudes to their learning are strong, from the early years to Year 6.

Pupils play an active role in the school. They take great pride in their jobs as school councillors, librarians and play leaders. This supports pupils to develop a sense of responsibility and respect for others. Children attending the pre-school and Nursery become increasingly independent when they spend some of their time learning with children in the Reception class.

Relationships between pupils and their teachers are warm and respectful. In lessons, pupils listen carefully and collaborate well. Adults follow the school behaviour system effectively. There are very few incidents of poor behaviour. Bullying is rare. Should any bullying occur, pupils trust adults to deal with it swiftly.

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

Leaders are ambitious for all pupils. They work well with other schools and colleagues across the trust. Leaders, including members of the local governing board, are considerate of staff workload. Staff appreciate this and are positive about their experience of working at the school.

Leaders prioritise the teaching of reading. The pre-school and Nursery children explore sounds and language for communication, such as songs and rhymes. Leaders ensure that all teachers are experts in the teaching of reading. In the early years and key stage 1, teachers ensure that daily reading books match the sounds that pupils know. Staff share their love of poems and stories enthusiastically with children.

The reading curriculum has a clear structure and sequence. This helps pupils to learn how to read and spell words before they move on to develop greater understanding of the texts. Leaders insist that pupils read at home and in school every day. Pupils who need help to read accurately and fluently receive extra support quickly and regularly. Pupils talk confidently about their favourite stories and the authors who visit them in school.

The school has drawn effectively on expertise from trust leaders to improve the curriculum and develop teachers' skills in most subjects. Subject leaders have

benefited from focused support from the trust curriculum leaders to plan the content and sequencing of the curriculum well. This is particularly successful in subjects such as mathematics and music.

Teachers receive the training they need to deliver an ambitious curriculum. They are clear about what pupils should know and by when, so that they can build knowledge over time. Teachers have strong subject knowledge and use this well to challenge pupils. Pupils receive useful feedback. This helps pupils know how to improve.

Checks on pupils' learning accurately identify pupils' misconceptions. Teachers use this information effectively to make improvements to the curriculum. This is successful in most subjects. However, in a few subjects, pupils still have gaps in their knowledge that have not been addressed. Governors are not sufficiently aware of this. They have not ensured that leaders are tackling these inconsistencies.

Leaders, including the special educational needs coordinator (SENCo), have a secure understanding of the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils with SEND enjoy an appropriately ambitious curriculum. Staff identify pupils' needs quickly and support them well in lessons. As a result of some thoughtful adjustments, most pupils with SEND are becoming increasingly successful.

Pupils explore many aspects of the personal, social and health education (PSHE) curriculum very well. They broaden their geographical and cultural horizons through links with partners in India and Nepal. The PSHE curriculum is less effective in educating pupils about healthy lifestyles.

Staff play an important role in helping pupils to stay focused and motivated. Teachers have well established classroom routines and clear expectations. This means that pupils' learning is rarely hampered by poor behaviour.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff have received training so that they are alert to any signs that a pupil might be at risk of harm. Teachers use the school system effectively to report any worries. Concerns are followed up swiftly by leaders in partnership with a range of external professionals. Consequently, families and pupils receive support in a timely fashion.

Recruitment procedures are thorough. Staff supervise pupils effectively and ensure the learning environment is well organised and secure.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The quality of the PSHE curriculum is variable. Some aspects of the PSHE curriculum, such as educating pupils about healthy lifestyles, have not been considered as well as others. Leaders need to ensure that all aspects of the PSHE curriculum are implemented effectively.
- There are weaknesses in the quality of the curriculum in a few subjects. As a result, there are some gaps in pupils' knowledge. Members of the local governing board have not made themselves aware of this. Governors need to ensure that leaders are improving these areas of the curriculum so that there is the same high-quality curriculum for pupils in all subjects.

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	144535
Local authority	Devon
Inspection number	10200936
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	89
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Paul Ginnings
Headteacher	Rob Norton
Website	www.teamacademytrust.com
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- High Bickington Church of England Academy converted to become an academy school in July 2017. At this time, it joined the TEAM academy trust. When its predecessor school, High Bickington Church of England Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to require improvement overall.
- The pre-school, Nursery and Reception unit caters for two-, three- and four-year-olds.
- The school is split over two sites. One site houses the pre-school, Nursery and Reception classes. Pupils in Years 1 to 6 are educated in a separate school building in High Bickington.
- The school uses no alternative provision.
- The school is a voluntary-controlled Church of England school. The most recent section 48 inspection took place in September 2016. The next section 48 inspection is likely to take place before July 2024.

Information about this inspection

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

This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation.

- Inspectors did deep dives in early reading, mathematics, history and music. This included discussions with subject leaders, lesson visits, looking at examples of work, discussions with teachers, discussions with pupils, and listening to pupils read to an adult. The lead inspector considered some aspects of the PSHE and art and design curriculums.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, curriculum leaders, the SENCo, the trust's chief executive officer, staff and governors, including the chair of the local governing board. Some of the meetings were held remotely.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documentation provided by the school, including leaders' self-evaluation, improvement plans, minutes from governor meetings and documentation relating to attendance and behaviour.
- Inspectors examined safeguarding records, checked staff's safeguarding knowledge and spoke with pupils. The lead inspector met with the designated safeguarding leader.
- Inspectors considered 19 responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, and 15 free-text comments. They took into consideration all responses to the survey for staff and the pupils' survey.

Inspection team

Sue Costello, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Martin Greenwood

Ofsted Inspector

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