

Inspection of Christ the Sower Ecumenical Primary School

Singleton Drive, Grange Farm, Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire MK8 0PZ

Inspection dates: 14 and 15 November 2023

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

The headteacher of this school is Mel Nugent. This school is part of Oxford Diocesan Bucks Schools Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Sulina Piesse, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Michael Mill.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy being part of a positive and inclusive school community. The school has high expectations of all pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils are passionate about learning and respond well to leaders' ambitions. As a result, they achieve well in most curriculum subjects.

The school encourages pupils to be good citizens. Pupils learn how to make constructive choices from the teaching of the CARE (choices, aspiration, reflection and engagement) curriculum. One parent reflected, 'The CARE values are noticeably and continuously weaved throughout everything the school does.' Pupils demonstrate these qualities through positive relationships with other pupils and staff. They are polite and considerate. They behave well and know that adults take concerns seriously. This helps pupils to feel safe and cared for.

Pupils are positive about the school. They understand how to keep themselves healthy and positively manage their emotions. Pupils appreciate how the school rewards their achievements and celebrates their efforts. They value the wide range of opportunities in school. This includes the STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) week, where representatives from a car manufacturer provide insights into engineering careers. As a result, pupils have high aspirations for future careers and achievements.

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

The school has established an ambitious and well-considered curriculum. In most subjects, detailed planning contains the important knowledge and skills that pupils should learn from Nursery onwards. Staff follow the curriculum closely, and this helps most pupils to build learning well over time.

In most subjects, such as mathematics, teachers are effective at checking how well pupils understand the key content. They accurately identify gaps and use this information to adapt future teaching to swiftly address misconceptions and gaps in learning. In a small number of subjects, the school has not identified and sequenced the precise knowledge for pupils to learn. This means that staff do not emphasise the most important content, and checks of pupils' understanding are less accurate. This slows pupils' learning in a few subjects. The school rigorously identifies the needs of pupils with SEND. Where the curriculum is precisely defined, pupils with SEND achieve well.

The teaching of reading is effective. Pupils get off to a flying start in early years. The school has a well-sequenced phonics scheme that staff consistently follow. Pupils develop into confident readers. Weaker readers are quickly identified and are supported effectively. This helps them to catch up with their peers. Pupils read books that closely match the sounds they know. Older pupils are encouraged to read a wide range of books, including those from other cultures, faiths and perspectives. Pupils relish staff reading books aloud to them. This exposes pupils to varied texts

that they might not read independently. Newsletters, workshops and targeted help for reading support parents to read with pupils at home.

Pupils are well behaved. Staff explicitly teach children how to follow rules and routines from the start of Nursery. Children learn to be kind and settle minor disagreements. As a result, pupils enthusiastically follow routines and rules. Across the rest of the school, if pupils present with more challenging behaviour, staff take consistent and proportionate action. Consequently, the school is a calm and purposeful environment. The school has a coherent strategy for improving attendance. Leaders work successfully with children and parents to improve attendance. As a result, most children attend regularly, and there are tangible improvements for those who do not.

The school prioritises pupils' personal development and provides well-considered opportunities. Children learn about important life skills, such as cleaning their hands and teeth. Across the whole school, staff positively develop pupils' understanding of different family structures, cultures and religions. This results in an inclusive school culture. Pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, are supported to develop their interests and talents. This includes sporting fixtures, trips and assemblies from different faith leaders. As a result, pupils benefit from varied and rich experiences that prepare them well for the following stages of their education.

All leaders are fully committed to the school. They know the school well and provide robust challenge to one another to further improve the school. They keep pupils' interests at the centre of their decision-making. Staff, including early career teachers, are well supported. Their training enables them to improve their teaching and subject knowledge. Parents appreciate how the school works to keep them involved in what pupils learn and how they can support this at home. As a result, the school is improving well.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The curriculum in a small number of foundation subjects needs refining. As a result, pupils do not consistently learn and remember the most important knowledge over time. Leaders should continue to improve curriculum sequencing and assessment in these subjects to ensure that pupils achieve highly across the curriculum.

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

Unique reference number	147269
Local authority	Milton Keynes
Inspection number	10296533
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	301
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Michael Mill
CEO of the trust	Sulina Piesse
Headteacher	Mel Nugent
Website	www.ctsmk.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- This school is part of the Oxford Diocesan Bucks Schools Trust.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.
- This is an Ecumenical school. The school's last Section 48 inspection was in June 2017.
- Christ the Sower Ecumenical Primary School converted to become an academy in September 2019. When its predecessor school, Christ the Sower Ecumenical Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be inadequate overall.

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.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, design and technology, modern foreign languages and physical education. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about 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.
- The inspectors met with the headteacher, senior leaders, teachers and pupils. The lead inspector met with the members of the governing body, including the chair of governors, and also met with members of the trust board.
- 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.
- Inspectors gathered evidence to explore the impact of pupils' behaviour during lessons and at playtimes.
- Inspectors considered the views of parents submitted through Ofsted Parent View. The views of staff and pupils were also considered through Ofsted's surveys. Inspectors also spoke to pupils throughout the inspection to gather their views.

Inspection team

Toby Martlew, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Gemma Piper	Ofsted Inspector
Lorraine Greco	Ofsted Inspector

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