

Inspection of a good school: Halam Church of England Primary School

The Turnpike, Halam, Newark, Nottinghamshire NG22 8AE

Inspection date:

21 February 2024

Outcome

Halam Church of England Primary School continues to be a good school.

The executive headteacher of this school is Aly Speed. This school is part of Minster Trust for Education, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Matthew Parris, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Nigel Turner. There is also a head of school, Tracy Francis.

What is it like to attend this school?

At Halam Church of England Primary School, staff and pupils live out the 'apple' values of 'aspire, partnership, persevere, love and enjoy'. It is a small school with a big heart. The importance of strong relationships is clear to see. Pupils enjoy school, and this is reflected in their positive attitudes. Pupils know that they are safe and well cared for.

The school has clear systems for supporting pupils' behaviour. Pupils conduct themselves well around the school. Older pupils nurture younger ones through roles such as play leaders and during house team projects. This helps them to become caring and compassionate individuals. Pupils behave well, and they trust adults to manage any incidents that may occur.

The school is ambitious for its pupils. Pupils respond positively to these high expectations. They work hard and are keen to share what they have learned. In lessons, pupils listen well and participate in discussions enthusiastically.

The school develops pupils' wider learning through a range of opportunities and experiences. These include participating in church services, singing as a school choir, enjoying visits to the seaside, and residential trips. Pupils talk passionately about the 'reading festival' with a tent pitched on the school field during the summer months.

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

The school has recently reviewed the curriculum to develop its relevance and ambition for all pupils, including for those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The 'apple' ethos runs through the curriculum in a sensible way. The curriculum enables

pupils to build their knowledge and skills in a logical order. The curriculum is designed to focus on the most important content that pupils must remember securely over time. However, staff do not always adjust the curriculum well enough to meet the needs of all pupils. Sometimes, pupils' work is either too easy or too hard. In some foundation subjects, the school's systems for checking on pupils' learning have not been fully developed.

There is a very strong whole-school reading culture at Halam Church of England Primary School. Reading is a priority. There is a clear and consistent structure for teaching phonics in the early years and Years 1 and 2. Pupils read well. They read books matched to the sounds they know. This means that pupils, including those who have fallen behind, can practise and apply what they have learned in class. This helps them to become fluent, confident readers. Older pupils enjoy reading. They talk confidently about authors and genres. Staff read to pupils regularly. Pupils have access to a diverse range of texts, supporting them to expand their vocabulary and knowledge across a range of subjects.

The school has a carefully considered personal development offer for its pupils. Pupils know how to stay safe when they use the internet. For example, they know the importance of not sharing personal details. Pupils pursue their talents and interests through a range of clubs. They build their confidence and self-esteem on residential. Trips and visitors also help pupils to understand the curriculum content. Links with a local university on a space programme mean that pupils can work with a professor using the Faulkes Telescope. Pupils share this experience online, and cosmologists respond from around the world.

The school is ambitious for what pupils with SEND can achieve. The school quickly identifies pupils' individual needs. Pupils with SEND learn the same curriculum as their peers. Pupils with SEND are assessed at regular points to ensure that they continue to engage successfully in learning.

Alongside pupil well-being, the school also promotes staff well-being very effectively. Staff, governors, and the trust work closely together to make continual improvements to the school and meet the needs of the community. Governors and trustees support and challenge the school effectively. They make regular checks on the school's work. Consequently, they have an accurate view of the school's performance and its next steps.

Parents and carers have positive views about the school. They feel the school cares for pupils well. The 'family feel' makes everyone proud to be a part of the Halam Church of England Primary School community.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school's systems for checking on what pupils have learned are not yet fully developed in some of the foundation subjects. This means that the school cannot be fully sure how well pupils are learning the intended curriculum in these subjects. Any weaknesses in the implementation of the curriculum are not addressed as quickly as they might be. The school should continue to strengthen the checks that it carries out so that the curriculum is implemented consistently well in all subjects and has the desired impact on what pupils know and remember.
- Sometimes, staff do not adjust the curriculum well enough to meet the needs of all pupils. On some occasions, pupils can find learning too hard or too easy. The school must ensure that all staff can adapt the curriculum so that every pupil achieves as highly as possible.

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 predecessor school, Halam CofE Primary School, to be good in October 2012.

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	145646
Local authority	Nottinghamshire County Council
Inspection number	10286999
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	74
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of governing body	Charlotte Boyles
CEO of the trust	Matthew Parris
Executive Headteacher	Aly Speed
Website	www.halam.notts.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The executive headteacher was permanently appointed to her post in September 2023.
- The school joined the Minster Trust for Education in July 2020.
- Halam Church of England Primary School converted to become an academy school in July 2020. When its predecessor school, Halam CofE Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good overall.
- The most recent section 48 inspection of the school took place in June 2018, when it received an outstanding judgement. This is an inspection of the school's religious character.
- The school runs its own breakfast and after-school provision.
- The school does not use any alternative providers.

Information about this inspection

- 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 met with the executive headteacher, the head of school, groups of staff, groups of pupils, executive leaders from Minster Trust for Education and representatives of the local governing body. The lead inspector also met with the chief executive officer of Minster Trust for Education.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in the following subjects: early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, looked at samples of work and spoke to pupils about their learning.
- Inspectors also looked at samples of work in science, Latin and geography.
- The lead inspector listened to pupils read to an adult.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school site. Additionally, inspectors spoke to pupils to discuss their views about the school.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, Ofsted's online survey for parents, the pupil survey and the staff survey.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.

Inspection team

Ian Toon, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Anna Coney

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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