

St Chad's CofE (VC) First School

Address: Pattingham, Wolverhampton, West Midlands, WV6 7AQ

Unique reference number (URN): 124269

Inspection report: 3 March 2026

Exceptional	
Strong standard	● ● ●
Expected standard	● ● ● ●
Needs attention	
Urgent improvement	

✓ **Safeguarding standards met**

The safeguarding standards are met. This means that leaders and/or those responsible for governance and oversight fulfil their specific responsibilities and have established an open culture in which safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and concerns are actively identified, acted upon and managed. As a result, pupils are made safer and feel safe.

How we evaluate safeguarding

When we inspect schools for safeguarding, they can have the following outcomes:

- **Met:** The school has an open and positive culture of safeguarding. All legal requirements are met.
- **Not met:** The school has not created an open and positive culture of safeguarding. Not all legal requirements are met.

Strong standard ●

Attendance and behaviour

Strong standard ●

Leaders' work to achieve high attendance is a real strength. They have established attendance as a whole-school priority. It is underpinned by a strong culture of belonging for all pupils. Leaders monitor patterns of absence closely and act promptly when concerns emerge. Established systems allow them to identify pupils who may be at risk of attending less regularly. Leaders work constructively with families to remove barriers and provide tailored support. This is reflected in consistently high rates of attendance for all pupils.

Leaders have developed a calm and purposeful atmosphere in which pupils behave exceptionally well. Staff model high standards consistently, creating an environment where pupils feel safe, respected and ready to learn. Routines are well embedded, and pupils follow them with increasing independence. Older pupils take pride in being positive role models.

In lessons, pupils show mature attitudes. They understand and live out the school's rules of ready, respectful and responsible. Pupils listen attentively, focus on their learning and demonstrate resilience when work becomes challenging. Staff use highly effective strategies to support pupils who may need help managing their emotions. Incidents of poor behaviour, including bullying or discrimination, are rare. When issues arise, leaders respond swiftly and thoughtfully. This creates an environment where pupils feel safe and valued.

Leadership and governance

Strong standard ●

Leaders set a clear and ambitious direction for the school. They know the community extremely well and use this insight to astutely identify the right priorities for improvement. Leaders act with determination. They maintain high expectations for every pupil and take highly effective action to further strengthen the quality of education. Leaders demonstrate professionalism and integrity in all aspects of their work.

Leaders provide a meticulously designed programme of professional learning. They have precisely identified the areas of teaching that would benefit from further refinement, and their actions are having a positive impact. Training for staff is purposeful and closely aligned to improvement priorities. Leaders allocate time and resources effectively so staff have opportunities to hone their practice. Leaders are attentive to staff's workload and wellbeing. Leaders adapt systems, when necessary, so staff can work efficiently and confidently. As a result, morale is high and staff feel trusted and valued.

Governors provide knowledgeable and committed oversight. They are passionate about the school. Governors fulfil their responsibilities rigorously. They draw on a wide range of information to check that leaders' actions are improving provision, particularly for those pupils who face barriers to their learning or wellbeing.

Strong partnerships enhance the school's work further. Leaders share expertise with other schools within the federation and make effective use of external support to further strengthen curriculum and pastoral systems. This collaborative approach fosters a culture of openness, continual improvement and shared responsibility. Relationships with parents and

carers are excellent. Families value the school's work to help their children develop. Leadership, culture and systems are robust, enabling pupils and staff to thrive.

Personal development and wellbeing

Strong standard 

Leaders have created a well-considered personal development programme that enables pupils to flourish. Leaders ensure that pupils experience a wide range of enriching opportunities that deepen their understanding of the world and support their wellbeing. Pupils speak enthusiastically about visitors, visits outside school and after-school clubs. They explain how these experiences help them grow in confidence.

Pupils behave with integrity and consistently live up to the school's core values, such as wisdom and dignity. They know that their actions can make a difference to others. The school celebrates diversity, for example through music and literature. Leaders further broaden pupils' cultural understanding by arranging online meetings with leaders from a range of cultural and religious backgrounds. Pupils value these sessions because they can ask thoughtful questions and hear different perspectives. Through carefully designed lessons, pupils also develop an age-appropriate understanding of different ways that people choose to live. Pupils learn about equality, difference and respect in ways that help them appreciate the diversity of modern Britain and develop a comprehensive understanding of fundamental British values.

The curriculum for relationships and health education supports pupils to build a detailed understanding of important content, such as healthy relationships. Pupils learn to collaborate, manage disagreements and show empathy towards others. They demonstrate maturity during group tasks and listen respectfully to different viewpoints. Older pupils speak thoughtfully about concepts such as body changes. They know how to keep themselves safe, including when online.

Leadership is promoted to all pupils. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities or who are disadvantaged, take on roles such as eco leaders, classroom ambassadors and house captains. Pupils use these responsibilities to make tangible improvements to school life. Clubs are wide ranging, including sports clubs, outdoor learning and dance. Leaders track participation to ensure that those pupils who will benefit the most are included.

Pupils leave school as responsible, respectful and resilient individuals.

Expected standard

Achievement

Expected standard 

Pupils typically achieve well as they move through the school. They secure the knowledge they need in reading, writing and mathematics and build effectively on what they already know. Most pupils apply their learning confidently in different subjects and produce work that reflects their growing understanding. However, a small proportion of pupils make errors in their writing, particularly in relation to letter formation and handwriting. This affects the

consistency and overall quality of their written work across the curriculum. Leaders have taken appropriate action to address this. The impact of this work is beginning to be seen in improvements in pupils' writing.

Starting in the early years, children learn phonics successfully and quickly gain the confidence to read simple words with increasing fluency. Pupils draw on this knowledge over time to become fluent and confident readers.

Disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities typically progress well from their varied starting points.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

Leaders have an accurate understanding of the quality of the curriculum across the school. They continue to refine the content so that pupils build knowledge securely over time, starting in the early years. Staff typically teach the curriculum well. They use their subject expertise to give clear explanations. Staff regularly check understanding to ensure that pupils grasp essential ideas before moving on. Generally, staff adapt teaching appropriately for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. However, on occasion, these adaptations do not meet pupils' needs as effectively as they could.

Leaders prioritise the development of core skills in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils benefit from a suitable phonics programme, which is taught well. Staff identify any gaps in pupils' phonics knowledge and provide targeted support to address those gaps swiftly.

Pupils' vocabulary development has been prioritised. They have regular opportunities to learn ambitious vocabulary, including in the early years. However, sometimes, teaching does not help pupils to address errors in their writing skills, such as handwriting. This affects pupils' fluency and ability to communicate in writing in a range of subjects. Leaders have identified this and have introduced a handwriting scheme. This is beginning to make a difference. For example, staff are adopting more consistent approaches to helping pupils develop greater control and stamina when writing.

Early years

Expected standard 

Leaders have thought carefully about how learning will develop from Nursery to Reception, ensuring that children build securely on what they already know and can do. The curriculum places a strong emphasis on developing children's communication and language. Staff use high-quality texts, nursery rhymes and well-chosen vocabulary to enrich children's language skills. During guided activities, adults model language effectively. While adult interactions are typically of high quality, these could be more consistently sustained during child-initiated activities to move learning on and deepen children's understanding. Leaders are taking suitable action to address this.

Children in the early years experience a warm and nurturing environment where they feel secure and ready to learn. Staff know children well and use this knowledge to help children grow in their personal, social and emotional development. Leaders work closely with parents and carers to support children's development and ensure a smooth transition to school.

Reading is prioritised. Staff use a consistent approach to teaching letters and the sounds they make through daily phonics sessions. These sessions follow familiar routines that children enjoy. Staff identify children who need additional support quickly and provide timely intervention.

Routines are well established and help children develop independence and positive learning behaviours. As a result, children are prepared well for their transition to Year 1.

Inclusion

Expected standard 

Leaders maintain a clear and detailed understanding of pupils' individual needs. This enables leaders to identify barriers that may affect pupils' learning and wellbeing. Staff know individual pupils well. Staff use well-established systems to record, review and share important information about pupils' achievement, attendance and wellbeing. As a result, any emerging needs that pupils may have are identified quickly. Leaders are ambitious for all pupils and promote a culture where every pupil is expected to achieve well. Leaders ensure that pupils experience smooth transitions at key points, for example between the Reception class and Year 1. This helps pupils feel well supported.

Leaders work closely with staff to ensure pupils' needs are assessed accurately and support is put in place swiftly. Staff benefit from an ongoing professional learning programme that develops their confidence in adapting teaching. As a result, most pupils access the full curriculum alongside their peers. Adaptations to learning are typically well considered. However, at times, these adaptations are not as closely aligned to pupils' needs as they could be.

Leaders monitor carefully the impact of interventions and the support pupils receive. Leaders use additional funding, including the pupil premium, thoughtfully to reduce barriers to learning. Strong partnerships with families and specialist services enhance the school's provision and help shape pupils' next steps.

What it's like to be a pupil at this school

Pupils are proud to be part of this nurturing school where the vision of 'One big family, learning together' is lived out each day. They arrive each morning with a sense of excitement. Staff greet pupils warmly and take time to ask how they are. This thoughtful start to the day helps pupils feel safe, valued and ready to learn. Across the school, pupils and staff share a strong sense of belonging, which creates a positive and supportive atmosphere.

Pupils enjoy their learning and articulate their knowledge with confidence. The curriculum is carefully organised so that pupils build knowledge over time. Pupils revisit key ideas and learn to look for connections between subjects to help them to remember their learning. Those who need additional help, including those who are disadvantaged or those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, receive effective support. This enables them to participate fully in the classroom and learn alongside their peers. Pupils typically achieve well and attend regularly. They value their education.

Behaviour throughout the school is incredibly calm and respectful. Pupils are polite and show genuine consideration for one another. Starting in the early years, children follow routines consistently, both in lessons and at other times of the school day. Bullying is very rare. Pupils are confident that staff will act swiftly and effectively should any concerns arise.

Pupils relish the wide range of enrichment opportunities on offer. They enjoy clubs, sporting activities and educational visits that help to extend their interests. Many pupils take pride in leadership roles, such as reading buddies and school ambassadors. Older pupils support younger children and help to organise their playtime activities. These responsibilities help pupils to grow in confidence, contribute positively to their community and develop the qualities they need to thrive in modern Britain. By the time pupils leave the school, they are confident, responsible learners who are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Next steps

- Leaders should continue to embed highly effective teaching of handwriting so that the quality of pupils' writing across the curriculum further improves and pupils are better prepared for their next stage of education.
 - Leaders should ensure that staff's adaptations to pupils' learning are closely aligned to the needs and targets of those pupils, so that they consistently benefit from high-quality support to learn successfully.
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About this inspection

The school is part of a federation called the South Staffordshire Learning Partnership.

The chair of the board of governors in this school is Jessica Shulman.

Inspectors carried out this full inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Following our renewed inspection framework, all inspections are now led by His Majesty's Inspectors (HMIs) or by Ofsted Inspectors (OIs) who have previously served as HMIs.

Inspectors spoke with school leaders, including the headteacher, during the inspection. The lead inspector spoke with representatives of the local authority and the Diocese of Lichfield, members of the federation, the chair of governors and other members of the governing board.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The school is registered as having a Church of England religious character. It is part of the Diocese of Lichfield. The school's last section 48 inspection for schools of a religious character was in February 2023.

The school does not make use of any alternative provision.

Lead inspector:

James Dean, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspector:

Nicola Driscoll, Ofsted Inspector

Facts and figures used on inspection

The data was used by the inspector(s) during the inspection. More recent data may have been published since the inspection took place.

 This data is from 3 March 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

110

Well below average

What does this mean?

The total number of pupils currently at this school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

National average: 272

School capacity

150

Below average

What does this mean?

The total number of pupils who can attend the school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

National average: 300

Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)

14.55%

Below average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years.

National average: 26.3%

Pupils with an education, health and care (EHC) plan

0.91%

Below average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with an education, health and care plan. This covers pupils with more support than is available through special educational needs support.

National average: 3.5%

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support

8.18%

Well below average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with reported special educational support needs at the school.

National average: 15%

Location deprivation

Below average

What does this mean?

Based on the English Indices of Deprivation (2019) and the school's location, we have calculated whether the school is located in a more or less deprived area.

Resourced Provision or SEND Unit (if applicable)

No resourced provision

What does this mean?

Whether school has Resourced Provision or SEND unit (if applicable).

Absence

Overall absence

The percentage of all possible mornings and afternoons missed due to absence from school (for whatever reason, whether authorised or unauthorised) across all pupils.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (2 term)	3.9%	5.2%	Below
2023/24 (3 term)	4.2%	5.5%	Below
2022/23 (3 term)	4.7%	5.9%	Below

Persistent absence

The percentage of pupils missing 10% or more of their possible mornings and afternoons.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (2 term)	6.7%	13.3%	Below
2023/24 (3 term)	7.9%	14.6%	Below
2022/23 (3 term)	5.6%	16.2%	Below

Our grades explained

Exceptional 

Practice is exceptional: of the highest standard nationally. Other schools can learn from it.

Strong standard 

The school reaches a strong standard. Leaders are working above the standard expected of them.

Expected standard 

The school is fulfilling the expected standard of education and/or care. This means they are following the standard set out in statutory and non-statutory legislation and the professional standards expected of them.

Needs attention ●

The expected standards are not met but leaders are likely able to make the necessary improvements.

Urgent improvement ●

The school needs to make urgent improvements to provide the expected standard of education and/or care.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) inspects services providing education and skills for children and learners of all ages, and inspects and regulates services that care for children and young people.

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