

Watchorn Christian School

Watchorn Church, Derby Road, Alfreton, Derbyshire DE55 7AQ

Inspection dates

26–27 June 2018

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Since the school opened in January 2018 with six nursery-aged children, the proprietor, headteacher, staff and governing body have created a safe and stimulating learning environment.
- There are effective systems in place to assess and track children’s progress. Careful planning of children’s next steps ensures that they make good progress. The quality of teaching is consistently good.
- Leaders have ensured that there is a broad and balanced curriculum. Children experience a wide variety of educational visits and visitors.
- Relationships between adults and children are warm and caring. Children behave well, get on with each other and share resources maturely.
- The governing body has made a good start in monitoring certain aspects of the school. The members are knowledgeable and understand their roles well.
- Parents’ and carers’ views of the school are extremely positive. All parents state that their children are happy, safe and making good progress.
- The school has not yet made links with other schools in order to share good practice and moderate children’s work.
- The school improvement plan does not consistently contain precise actions, timescales and monitoring opportunities. The governing body cannot hold leaders fully to account for their actions.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

- The school meets the requirements of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 (‘the independent school standards’) and associated requirements.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that school improvement plans consistently contain precise actions, timescales and monitoring opportunities, enabling the governing body to hold leaders fully to account for their actions.
- Make links with other schools in order to share good practice and moderate children's work to ensure that teachers' assessment judgements are consistently accurate.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- In a short time, the headteacher and proprietor have established an ambitious culture, projecting high aspirations for children's behaviour, attitudes to learning and attainment. The school's values of respect, working hard, community and praise are evident throughout the school.
- The headteacher knows the children and families well. Good communication and strong relationships exist between school staff and parents/carers. Any questions or issues are therefore resolved promptly. The school website provides all relevant statutory information.
- Parents and carers speak highly of the school and its staff. One parent commented: 'Watchorn is a lovely place for them to learn and grow.' All other parents with whom the inspector spoke echoed this view.
- The headteacher has a good understanding of the special educational needs (SEN) code of practice. There are already strong links with outside agencies, such as the speech and language and early years intervention teams. Any child who requires extra support is identified quickly and therefore given the extra support they need.
- The headteacher has ensured that the children receive a broad and balanced curriculum. Since the school opened in January 2018, the six part-time children have deepened their knowledge and understanding in such topics as 'ourselves', 'growing', 'animals' and 'the seaside'. Educational visits to a pet shop and a farm plus a snail hunt and a bird watching afternoon have greatly supported this learning.
- The proprietor, headteacher and governing body have ensured that all the independent school standards are met.
- Leaders have ensured that the school's safeguarding policy and other relevant policies are fit for purpose and are available for parents on the school website. All statutory requirements of the early years foundation stage are met.
- The school development plan does not consistently contain concise actions, timescales and monitoring opportunities. Consequently, the governing body cannot hold the headteacher fully to account for the actions she takes.
- The headteacher has not yet created links with other schools in order to share good practice and moderate children's achievements. Currently, leaders cannot be sure that the judgements teachers make regarding children's progress and attainment are consistently accurate and secure.

Governance

- The governing body has a good mix of skills and professional experiences in, for example, education, finance and marketing. The governing body has received appropriate training in safeguarding and the safer recruitment of staff. The members are therefore well placed to discharge their duties effectively.
- Individual governors have specific areas of responsibility in, for example, safeguarding,

the curriculum and the progress of children who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities. Governor visits made recently have checked on teachers' assessment procedures and the quality of the learning environment. After such a visit, comprehensive reports are shared with other governors at meetings. Consequently, members of the governing body are kept up to date with current identified strengths and development areas.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The designated safeguarding leads and teachers have received appropriate training in such areas as safer recruitment, paediatric first aid and spotting the signs of child sexual exploitation.
- There is a good system in place for adults to report any welfare concerns they have regarding a child or family. The headteacher understands the importance of seeking advice and help from outside agencies, should the need arise.
- The headteacher ensures that all relevant checks are made on adults before they start to work or volunteer at the school. Safeguarding records and staff recruitment files are kept securely and in good order.
- Risk assessments follow the school's policy and ensure that children are safe when, for example, they are out of school on an educational visit.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Transition into the early years is a strength. Staff undertake home visits and encourage parents to complete 'All about me' booklets that share children's strengths and interests. Children visit the school before starting, in order to familiarise themselves with the new environment, routines and adults. Consequently, staff know children before they start and children settle quickly.
- A comprehensive 'baseline' assessment is undertaken in the first few weeks of a child starting the school. This allows staff to assess accurately a child's strengths and development areas. Subsequent progress is measured accurately and frequently from these various starting points.
- Frequent ongoing assessments help adults to judge which areas a child is progressing well in and which areas might need extra support. As a result, adults know children very well and plan carefully for their next steps in learning.
- Parents contribute to their child's assessment and record achievements/successes at home through 'wow cards'. These cards are frequently shared with staff and give up-to-date information that allows staff to plan carefully for children's future activities in order to ensure that they make good progress.
- The indoor and outdoor learning environments are bright, stimulating and engaging. They provide children with a wide range of activities that help to develop their knowledge and skills in all areas of the early years foundation stage curriculum. Staff use children's interests to engage them. For example, two boys were observed playing with dinosaurs while the teacher skilfully developed their mathematical language of 'bigger, smaller,

longer and shorter’.

- Well-planned activities enthuse children and enable them to sustain concentration. During the inspection, children were observed developing their scientific knowledge and vocabulary by using warm water and salt to melt ice that had treasure frozen inside it. Adults were skilfully questioning children and asking them to predict what might happen next. Children thoroughly enjoyed the experience of retrieving the gold and the letter ‘g’ that had been added to the ice in order to reinforce earlier phonics work.
- The class lion ‘Judah’ often accompanies children on weekend activities. A scrapbook contains photographs and a record is made of where Judah has been. This activity enables children to develop their speech and language skills as they tell other children about Judah’s latest adventure, and other children have the opportunity to ask questions.
- The teacher encourages children to continue their learning at home through frequent ‘home learning challenges’. For example, recently when learning about ‘The Lighthouse Keeper’s Lunch’, children were encouraged to draw a picture of the lighthouse keeper’s lunch and talk to an adult about being safe in the kitchen.
- The school provides parents with comprehensive information regarding the attainment and progress made by children in the form of an end-of-year report.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school’s work to promote pupils’ personal development and welfare is good.
- Children’s physical and emotional well-being is catered for well. For example, there are opportunities for children to run and ride tricycles. The positive relationships that exist between adults and children help to ensure that children are listened to, nurtured and kept safe.
- Children are confident learners. They ask questions of adults and are happy to fetch any resources they need independently.
- Well-established routines ensure that children are kept safe. For example, they walk sensibly between activities and wash their hands after using the toilet.
- The school is preparing children for life in modern Britain. Since the school opened in January 2018, children have experienced Chinese New Year celebrations, tasted spices from other cultures, and celebrated St George’s Day and the recent royal wedding.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. They interact with each other well and share resources maturely. Children respond swiftly to adults’ instructions without fuss.
- Children attend the school frequently. Well-established routines and positive relationships with staff ensure that children settle quickly and are ready to learn at the start of the day.
- Children take responsibility for putting away resources and help each other to do this. Consequently, the classroom is tidy and safe. Children were observed using a range of resources, including scissors, safely.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- As only part-time children of nursery age started at the school in January 2018, there has been no published outcomes to evaluate.
- Inspection evidence and information provided by the school indicate that children are making good progress in a wide variety of areas. For example, the majority of children can recognise and count numbers to three. The assessment system shows clearly children's starting points and the amount of progress they have made. The inspector examined all children's workbooks and agreed that the schools' assessments are accurate.
- Children are making good progress in all areas of learning, but particularly in writing. For example, a number of children who could not hold a pencil in January are now successfully copying their names and writing individual letters correctly.
- Children are developing phonic knowledge. For example, during the inspection children were encouraged to say and write the letter 'g'. Children then correctly proposed words, such as 'gold', 'grass' and 'girl', as words that started with this letter sound.
- The vast majority of children are on track to achieve a good level of development by the end of the Reception Year.

School details

Unique reference number	144806
DfE registration number	830/6044
Inspection number	10048638

This inspection was carried out under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

Type of school	Other Independent School
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	3 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of part-time pupils	6
Proprietor	Watchorn Christian School Limited
Chair	Mark Ozenbrook
Headteacher	Carol Pearson
Annual fees (day pupils)	£3,000
Telephone number	07884 484840
Website	http://watchornchristianschool.co.uk
Email address	mark@avssp.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	18 July 2017

Information about this school

- Watchorn Christian School opened in January 2018. It currently has six part-time children in the Nursery classroom.
- The school is located in the premises of Watchorn Church. It occupies part of a modern extension to the historic church building.
- The school has a Christian ethos.
- The roles of the headteacher, class teacher and teaching assistant are undertaken on a part-time basis.

Information about this inspection

- Ofsted announced the inspection to the headteacher the day before the inspection started.
- The inspector observed the learning of children in the Nursery class. He examined children's assessment information and examples of the activities completed by children since the school opened in January 2018.
- The inspector held meetings with the headteacher, proprietor, class teacher and a group of governors.
- The inspector scrutinised a range of documents, including minutes of the governing body meetings, current assessment information provided by the school, the school development plans and records relating to safeguarding.
- The inspector spoke with parents before school and took account of four responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire. The inspector considered the six responses from parents to the Ofsted free-text service and four responses to Ofsted's staff questionnaire.
- The school was previously inspected in July 2017. This pre-registration inspection stated that the school was likely to meet all the independent school standards when it opened.

Inspection team

Peter Stonier, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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