

Inspection of a good school: Ursula Taylor Church of England School

High Street, Clapham, Bedford, Bedfordshire MK41 6EG

Inspection dates:

29–30 October 2019

Outcome

Ursula Taylor Church of England School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are polite. They respect each other and adults. Pupils speak very positively about their school and its staff. Pupils feel that adults have high expectations of them. Yet, teachers do not put pupils under too much pressure when pupils find work difficult. Pupils know that staff give them help when it is needed.

Pupils feel safe and know how to stay safe online. They know about types of bullying and what to do should bullying occur. Pupils report that it very rarely happens. They confirm that all adults know how to deal with any small behaviour problems. Pupils say that there are only ever 'small issues; never anything big'.

Staff care about pupils and champion their right to a full education. Pupils develop independence and confidence in their school work and play. They are happy to have a go at new things. Pupils know that making mistakes is part of learning. One infant pupil summed up the views of others in saying that, 'Getting it wrong is part of learning.'

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

Children learn well in the early years. They respond readily to adults' high expectations. Children make enthusiastic use of the well organised resources in the outdoor and indoor learning areas.

Pupils know right from wrong. They play and work well alongside each other. They show very positive attitudes to their learning. Disruption to learning is rare.

Pupils' personal development is provided for well. They thrive in the positive ethos that leaders have created in the school. Pupils learn about the wider world and about local village life. For instance, pupils visit a local farm and learn about aspects of the world around them.

Leaders have made considerable improvements to how mathematics is planned and taught.

They have chosen appropriate new mathematics resources. Teachers plan and teach activities that enable pupils to make good use of these resources in lessons. The impact of these changes is seen in pupils' good-quality work.

Leaders have made sure that pupils develop better skills in reading. Pupils learn phonics from the start of their education. Phonics is well taught. The majority of pupils read at an age-appropriate level by the end of Year 1. Those who need to catch up get the help that they need from well-trained staff. Staff make sure that pupils read books that match their interests and needs. These approaches are already extending pupils' vocabulary. Pupils are enthusiastic about their reading.

Pupils did not make enough progress in writing by the end of key stage 2 in 2019. Leaders quickly identified what needed to change so that pupils' writing improves. Pupils enjoy opportunities to improve their written work. They are proud to share their writing with parents and staff, and in assembly. Pupils write about their learning in other subjects, such as history. Their writing shows that they use powerful vocabulary well.

Leaders have made sure staff are well trained to teach writing. This is having a positive impact, although it remains a priority for improvement. Adults help pupils to write more neatly and spell correctly. Staff encourage pupils to say their answers to questions in full sentences. This is making the biggest difference to pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Teachers also make sure that pupils with SEND are fully included in learning activities.

Disadvantaged pupils' work is of a good quality. Teachers help them to overcome any issues that can make learning more difficult. Teachers ask probing questions to check pupils' understanding. Leaders make sure pupils can take part in all activities that the school offers. However, there is no published plan to explain to parents how leaders use the pupil premium grant to help disadvantaged pupils' education.

Leaders have put in place well-designed schemes of learning. In history, pupils easily recall facts that they have learned in earlier years. They love aspects of history that they act out in role play, or that are, in their opinions, 'disgusting'. History enquiry skills are not as well sequenced as the knowledge taught.

Since the previous inspection, the school has changed from being a lower school to a full primary. Governors are aware that some staff feel that the changes have affected morale. Governors have worked with leaders to support staff's well-being. Many staff already notice the positive impact of governors' actions.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders make sure all staff receive safeguarding regular training. Staff know the signs that might raise concerns about pupils' welfare. Adults know what action to take if they have any concerns about pupils. Leaders act on all concerns raised by staff about pupils' welfare. Leaders work with other organisations when it is appropriate to do so.

Records of the checks that leaders carry out on adults working in the school are thorough.

All parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, say their children feel safe at school.

What does the school need to do to?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Written work in pupils' books shows that previously, in upper key stage 2, teachers' expectations for presentation and the content of work were not high enough. Leaders recognised this as a priority for improvement and have taken appropriate action. Pupils' writing is improving. Leaders should continue to implement their action plans so that pupils present their work well, spell accurately, and develop further their confidence, knowledge and skills to use enriched vocabulary.
- Disadvantaged pupils did not achieve as well as they should have by the end of key stage 2 in 2019. Staff provide suitable support for disadvantaged pupils. Pupils' work is improving. Leaders must produce a pupil premium strategy that meets requirements. Leaders should publish this strategy so that parents know how the fund is spent and the impact on pupils' learning. Leaders should show how they have targeted pupil premium funding precisely to ensure that disadvantaged pupils make the best possible progress across the curriculum.
- Leaders have made sure that pupils gain a good grasp of historical knowledge. Because history topics are appropriately sequenced and taught, pupils recall earlier aspects of their learning easily. However, leaders have not ensured that history enquiry skills are as precisely sequenced and taught. Leaders should make clear how they want pupils' learning of enquiry skills to develop in each year group so that pupils' skills develop, and teachers can more easily assess how well pupils are achieving.

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 a section 8 inspection of a good school or non-exempt outstanding school. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that the school could now be better than good or that standards may be declining, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will convert the section 8 inspection to a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the second section 8 inspection since we judged the predecessor school, Ursula Taylor VC Lower School, to be good in December 2011.

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 Ofsted Parent View information 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 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	139990
Local authority	Bedford
Inspection number	10110272
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	360
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chairs of governing body	Julia Monger and Matthew Barker
Headteacher	Victoria Morrall
Website	www.ursulataylorschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	9 February 2016

Information about this school

- Since the previous inspection, Ursula Taylor Church of England School has become a full primary school, having previously been a lower school.
- The school has a breakfast club and after-school childcare provision.
- The school has two classes in each year group from Reception to Year 6.

Information about this inspection

- During the inspection, I met with the headteacher, members of the governing board, the deputy headteacher and the assistant headteacher. I spoke with an adviser from the local authority.
- I focused on the following subjects: reading, mathematics and history. To determine the quality of education, I spoke with leaders of reading, mathematics and history, visited lessons, spoke with pupils and staff, and carried out work scrutiny.
- I held meetings with the designated safeguarding leader, midday supervisors, held meetings with pupils and spoke to staff to check the school's safeguarding arrangements. I also checked the school's processes for checking the suitability of adults who work with pupils, and of adults who are regular visitors to the school.

- I scrutinised pupils' writing in their books, spoke with pupils about their writing and spoke with leaders about their action plans for improving writing.

Inspection team

Paula Masters, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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