

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

Blenheim Road, Horspath, Oxford, Oxfordshire OX33 1RY

Inspection date: 10 March 2020

Outcome

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

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a welcoming and happy school. Teachers have high expectations and challenge pupils to do their best. As a result, pupils achieve well, particularly in reading, writing and mathematics. Adults help pupils who need extra help with their work, emotions or behaviour, in a sensitive manner. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) achieve well.

Pupils are well cared for and safe. They are happy to talk to an adult if they are worried. Pupils say that bullying is rare and that any problems get sorted out when they arise.

Pupils behave well. Pupils want to learn because teachers make lessons interesting. They enjoy activities such as yoga and sporting events.

The vast majority of parents and carers are positive about the school. They are pleased with the changes made by the new headteacher, who joined the school in April 2019 following a period of instability. One parent said that Horspath is 'a great village school that we are proud to be part of'.

The aims of the school's curriculum are clear and well focused and are linked to the school's values – 'respect, truth, responsibility and forgiveness'. For example, older pupils help younger children with their reading.

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

Leaders have planned a broad and interesting curriculum that is sequenced well and covers the whole of the national curriculum. It effectively develops pupils' knowledge and skills across subjects. Trips, special events and visitors enhance pupils' experience and help pupils to remember their learning.

The teaching of reading is a high priority for the school. Phonics is taught systematically right from the start of early years. As a result, pupils achieve highly in the phonics screening check at the end of Year 1. Reading across key stage 2 has been strengthened as there is now a greater focus on the teaching of specific reading skills. For example, developing vocabulary has improved pupils' understanding of words. Pupils who find reading difficult get extra help from well-trained staff. This is helping them to become fluent readers.

A passion for reading is promoted well by teachers. Pupils read widely and speak confidently about books they choose and authors that they are 'hooked' on. The school's 'book spine' is sequenced well and ensures that texts are at the right level. Teachers choose books carefully that engage and motivate pupils.

Careful teaching sequences build pupils' knowledge and skills well. Teachers' strong subject knowledge enables them to challenge and support pupils effectively. Teachers check pupils' understanding regularly and systematically, particularly in mathematics. This ensures that any misunderstandings are addressed quickly. In history, for example, pupils gain a good grasp of different periods and of significant people such as Florence Nightingale. Subjects are enriched by memorable events that help pupils to remember and understand key knowledge. For example, pupils visited the Steam Museum where they learned about wartime evacuation.

Pupils with SEND receive effective support. This enables them to access the same curriculum and opportunities as other pupils. Leaders ensure that additional support and equipment are provided when needed for pupils.

Staff, including subject leaders, have received helpful guidance and support from the trust. This support has developed staff expertise effectively. However, curriculum plans are in the early stages of being taught and teachers continue to need support to implement curriculum plans consistently.

Pupils have opportunities to develop their independence and resilience. These include participating in the school council and becoming a 'playground pal'.

Pupils' behaviour is excellent. Pupils concentrate well in lessons and listen attentively to each other. They are eager to learn. They have positive attitudes to all areas of school life. As a result, lessons progress without disruption.

Leaders think carefully about staff workload and well-being. Staff are well supported in their work and say that leaders listen to their views.

The governing body is aware of the school's strengths and what needs improving further. Governors have ensured that effective resources to support the implementation of the curriculum have been purchased.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is a strong culture of safeguarding across the school. Leaders make sure that appropriate checks are carried out on staff before they start to work at the school. Staff have a good understanding of how to keep pupils safe. This is because they receive regular training and updates about safeguarding.

Leaders work well with outside agencies when needed. Any concerns that staff have about pupils are followed up quickly. Staff have a good understanding of the local context and are aware of issues affecting pupils in the area. For example, the curriculum has been strengthened to include more opportunities to teach internet safety.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Planning and programmes of work for the foundation subjects are well sequenced across the curriculum. These are in the early stages of implementation. Leaders should ensure that teachers continue to receive the support they need to develop their expertise in these subjects so that the curriculum is delivered consistently well.

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 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 first section 8 inspection since we judged the predecessor school, Horspath Church of England 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 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 the school and 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	144432
Local authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	10122310
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	139
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	James Askew
Headteacher	Rachel Medley
Website	www.horspath.oxon.sch.uk/
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school joined the River Learning Trust on 5 May 2017.
- This is a small Church of England School with 139 pupils.

Information about this inspection

- We met with the headteacher, senior and subject leaders, governors (including the chair of the governing body), the special educational needs coordinator, staff and pupils. The lead inspector also spoke to a representative from the diocese on the phone and met with a representative from the trust.
- We spoke with several parents at the beginning of the day of the inspection and took the views of 39 parents who responded to the Ofsted Parent View survey into account. We also considered the views of 34 parents who sent free-text messages.
- The views of three members of staff who responded to Ofsted's survey were also considered. We observed pupils' behaviour and interactions at various times during the school day.

- We looked at a range of school documentation, including documents about safeguarding, school development and the school's self-evaluation. We also looked at the school's policies on the website.
- We did deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics and history. We met with subject leaders, visited lessons, heard pupils reading, looked at pupils' work and spoke with senior leaders, teachers and pupils about each subject.

Inspection team

Mo Galway, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Richard Blackmore

Ofsted Inspector

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