

Inspection of a good school: Monks Risborough CofE Primary School

Peters Lane, Princes Risborough, Buckinghamshire HP27 9LZ

Inspection dates: 30 November and 1 December 2021

Outcome

Monks Risborough CofE Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy coming to school. They embrace the school's values of love, community, respect, generosity, friendship, perseverance, thankfulness and responsibility. Monks Risborough is a very nurturing and inclusive environment. Pupils say teachers are kind and help them to make good friends. Staff want the best for their pupils and have high expectations of what they can achieve.

Pupils behave well and are polite and welcoming. They play and work happily together. Older pupils act as buddies and provide good role models for younger pupils. Bullying is rare. If it does happen, pupils say that they can share their worries with adults in school and are confident any bullying issues will be addressed promptly.

Pupils enjoy the activities available to them both in and out of the classroom. These include well-chosen trips and interesting visitors. Pupils spoke enthusiastically about trips to the synagogue and the dress-up days linked to what they are learning. These opportunities help pupils to connect new knowledge with what they have learned before.

Nearly all parents and carers would recommend the school to others. One parent said, 'My children love the school, they feel very safe in the school environment and enjoy their learning'.

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

The school has been through a turbulent time with changes to school leadership since the last inspection. The new headteacher has had a significant and positive impact on the school in a short period of time. Leaders have looked carefully at the curriculum to make sure it provides pupils with a breadth and depth of knowledge. In English and mathematics, pupils learn knowledge in the right order. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, leaders are not as far ahead with their curriculum planning as they want to be. In history, for example, lessons do not precisely build on prior learning. Leaders are aware

of this and are making changes to help teachers check how pupils remember previous knowledge.

Leaders have prioritised reading across the school. Over the last year, staff have changed the way that they teach phonics to ensure that pupils learn sounds and develop their reading skills in a systematic way. Well-trained staff deliver good-quality phonics lessons as soon as children start in the early years. Leaders are quick to spot pupils who start to fall behind and give them the help they need. Teachers share their love of stories, and their pupils talk enthusiastically about the stories they have listened to. Teachers have selected books that link to the wider curriculum, and pupils say these books are interesting and exciting. For example, in year 5, pupils are learning about the Vikings through reading 'Beowulf'.

The mathematics curriculum is carefully sequenced to ensure that pupils secure knowledge over time. In the Reception Year, play areas provide opportunities for children to talk about number and shapes. Teachers break down the work that older pupils need to do into small steps. Pupils can explain how their previous learning relates to new learning in mathematics. For example, Year 3 pupils can use their understanding of multiplication to learn about division. Several pupils told the inspector that mathematics was their favourite subject.

Leaders are committed to involving all pupils in every aspect of school life. Clear arrangements are in place to ensure that pupils' needs are met quickly. Staff work closely with outside agencies and specialist providers to ensure that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) receive the support that they need. Leaders make sure that all pupils with SEND get strong pastoral support. For example, staff run nurture groups to help pupils understand their feelings and emotions.

Most pupils are well behaved in their lessons and around the school. Those who struggle to follow the teachers' instructions or find it hard to behave are supported well to learn to make the right choices.

Pupils enjoy taking on positions of responsibility, such as sports ambassadors and school council. They also enjoy representing the school at sporting events. The school supports local charities and pupils enjoy learning about their local community. Visitors to school and external trips help pupils learn about different cultures and religions. These experiences help to develop pupils' understanding of life beyond Monks Risborough.

Staff are proud to work at the school. There is a great team spirit at Monks Risborough, with staff supporting each other well and saying that leaders are considerate of their workload and well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is a strong culture to safeguard children at this school. Staff know their pupils very well and act in their best interests. Safeguarding training for all staff is up to date. Staff know what to do if they have any concerns or worries about pupils' welfare.

Governors monitor and challenge the school's safeguarding work. Appropriate checks are carried out on adults who work in the school.

Leaders use the curriculum to teach pupils how to keep themselves safe, for example when using the internet. Pupils say they feel safe, and parents agree.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school's curriculum is not yet sufficiently well planned and sequenced in history, music and art. In these subjects, leaders should develop the curriculum planning to ensure learning builds on what pupils already know and understand. Leaders need to monitor carefully the actions already taken to revise next year's curriculum. This should include ensuring that all staff have the subject knowledge and expertise to implement the changes. For this reason, the transitional arrangements have been applied.

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 outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, 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 deem the section 8 inspection as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the second section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in March 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.

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	110434
Local authority	Buckinghamshire
Inspection number	10200210
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	195
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Colin Platt
Headteacher	Amy Robinson
Website	mrisborough.bucks.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	12 October 2016

Information about this school

- This is an average-sized primary school with one class in each year group.
- There have been leadership changes since the last inspection with the appointment of a new headteacher, two assistants headteachers and a new chair of governors.
- This school is a voluntary-controlled Church of England school in the diocese of Oxford. Its last section 48 inspection took place in March 2017.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and has taken that into account in their evaluation.
- During the inspection, the inspector met with the headteacher and members of the local governing body. The inspector held telephone calls with the local authority and a representative from the diocese.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, the inspector met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and

looked at samples of pupils' work. The inspector also looked at curriculum plans and spoke to leaders about other curriculum subjects.

- The inspector considered 68 responses to the Ofsted online survey, Parent View, including 41 free-text responses. They also considered 88 responses to Ofsted's confidential pupil online survey and 26 responses to the staff survey.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector looked at the school's training records, spoke with pupils and checked staff's safeguarding knowledge to ensure that pupils are safe. Meetings were held with the designated safeguarding lead and the school's special educational needs coordinator.

Inspection team

David Harris, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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