

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

Church Lane, Peppard, Henley-on-Thames, Oxfordshire RG9 5JU

Inspection date:

8 December 2021

Outcome

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

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils quite simply love being part of the school community. They really appreciate the range of out-of-school activities on offer, including sports, singing and cooking.

Leaders are determined that pupils will reach their potential and in many respects they do. Pupils develop into thoughtful young citizens, well set up for the future in terms of confidence and self-belief. They develop the maturity to be accepting of differences and understand the need to be tolerant of others.

Behaviour is mostly exemplary. Staff set high expectations from the moment children join the Reception class, so pupils across the school settle quickly to learning and do not disrupt their classmates. Pupils develop a healthy attitude to learning and are courteous and respectful to each other and adults.

In pupils' view there is not really any serious misbehaviour, although they realise that sometimes people have a bad day. This rarely translates into anything more, but any unkind behaviour that is perceived as bullying is taken seriously, thoroughly investigated and seen through to a resolution.

Typically, pupils achieve well in reading, writing and mathematics. Work to further enhance their learning in other subjects is well under way but needs some more refinement.

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

Most pupils quickly learn to read. Still, leaders have recently adopted a new scheme to ensure that phonics is taught systematically and at a good pace. Staff are well trained, so their phonics teaching is precise. The more structured approach is particularly benefiting pupils who do not acquire early reading skills as quickly as others for whatever reason. Regular checks soon pick up these pupils. Staff tailor support in school and involve

parents to help at home. The two-pronged approach means that pupils soon catch up with their peers.

Leaders have also made good use of external support to develop a more systematic approach to teaching reading. Well-crafted plans set out how pupils' skills and understanding should develop over time. Training has heightened teachers' understanding and given them valuable strategies to enhance pupils' reading. Staff's passion for reading rubs off on pupils.

Mathematics teaching has been enhanced too. A scheme has been introduced to steer the logical development of pupils' knowledge and skills. Teachers are adept at making sure that pupils practise and build on what they have learned before and commit key facts to memory. They systematically assess pupils' learning at the end of a series of lessons but are not yet routinely checking if pupils have remembered the important smaller steps along the way.

Teachers are accomplished at identifying pupils who need extra support. They draw on the expertise of colleagues to adapt teaching to help pupils learn alongside their classmates. Currently, there is no special educational needs and/or disabilities coordinator for staff to ask when they need further help identifying and meeting an individual's specific needs. The headteacher is sensibly looking to external support to minimise delays in these cases.

The headteacher is mindful of the potential for overload when there are only so many ways of sharing out responsibilities in a small school. The COVID-19 pandemic has created additional challenges. The headteacher does his best to protect staff from pressure, but this means that he shoulders many responsibilities, including, at the moment, the development of the curriculum. Other than in English and mathematics, the role of the subject leader, or champion, is underdeveloped.

Consequently, the school has relied on using commercial schemes of work to underpin teaching and learning in other subjects. These set out the knowledge and skills that pupils should gain over time. However, as yet, guidance is not always sufficiently clear to ensure teachers understand and check the building blocks in learning that pupils need to acquire from Reception onwards. Where teachers have good subject knowledge, they get the balance right between interesting activities and deepening understanding so that pupils remember important knowledge. Sometimes, however, the balance is not quite right and what pupils remember is the activity rather than the learning.

Governors are keenly aware of the school's strengths and the need to further improve the curriculum. They too are mindful of the pressures on staff in a small school and are taking action to ensure that they look after staff's mental health. Individual governors have a good working knowledge of the areas they are linked to. However, the checks and balances set out in the school's development plan are not sufficiently well focused to allow the governing body to determine if the quality of education is improving.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders create a caring atmosphere where pupils feel at ease sharing worries and staff are alert to signs that all is not well. Staff training is up to date and current. Staff know who to report concerns to. Leaders are investing in a new online reporting system to further tighten procedures and ensure that nothing is missed. Any reported incidents are followed through with tenacity.

The personal, social and health education curriculum is at the heart of the school's work. Through it, pupils learn how to keep themselves safe and how to look after their physical and mental health.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders rely on commercial schemes of work to plan the curriculum. These do not always start in Reception or break down knowledge and skills into small enough steps. This means that teachers do not have effective guidance to plan what pupils need to learn when and what it is important to assess they have remembered. Leaders are aware of this and are working through subjects methodically to plan the curriculum in more depth. For this reason, the transitional arrangements have been applied.
- Leadership of most subjects is underdeveloped. Measures to determine the success of the curriculum improvements underway are not exacting enough. This means that there is not a sufficiently detailed oversight of pupils' learning from Reception to Year 6, both in terms of the intended curriculum and its effectiveness. Leaders should develop the role of the subject leader, or champion, so that they understand the progression of learning in their subject and know how to support their colleagues and monitor the implementation of the curriculum.

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 October 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 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	123135
Local authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	10200382
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	101
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Piers Edgell
Headteacher	Nick Steele
Website	www.peppardprimary.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	17 November 2016, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The chair of governors took up role in August 2020.
- The school's last section 48 inspection of its religious character took place in 2016.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation.
- The inspection team met with the headteacher and members of the governing body, including the chair and vice-chair. They held discussions by telephone with the local authority school improvement partner and a representative from the diocese.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, inspectors met with the subject leader, looked at curriculum plans and, where possible, visited a sample of lessons. They also spoke to teachers and to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- The lead inspector also talked with the headteacher about other subjects and looked at curriculum plans.
- The inspection team evaluated safeguarding by talking to the designated safeguarding leads and governors, reviewing recruitment checks on staff and other safeguarding documents and records, and talking to staff and pupils.
- Inspectors took account of the views of pupils, parents and staff shared through Ofsted's online surveys and in meetings with pupils and staff.
- The inspection team also reviewed other documentation provided by the school or available on the school's website, including the school's self-evaluation, the school development plan, policies, published information about pupils' behaviour and attendance and their performance in national assessments.

Inspection team

Alison Bradley, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Linda Culling

Her Majesty's Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
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