

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

Cockcroft Road, Didcot, Oxfordshire OX11 8LJ

Inspection dates:

4 and 5 May 2022

Outcome

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

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils eagerly come to school each morning knowing that they will have an inspiring day ahead. The teachers have high expectations of what pupils will achieve in their learning. The school's code of conduct and embedded values help pupils know how they should behave and why.

As they learn to read and write, pupils persevere and are proud of their achievements. They show love and respect to their friends and adults that help them. As a result, learning is calm and purposeful. This is a school where pupils are cherished and nurtured. Pupils' interests and their individuality are understood and valued.

As one pupil commented: 'Everyone works together as part of one big community.' All pupils know that they must support each other and be kind to one another. Pupils say that bullying is not an issue. If bullying occurs, staff respond effectively as a team to any concerns raised.

Pupils benefit from the wide range of opportunities that enrich their learning. The whole school community particularly appreciates the time they spend together. This includes joyous singing during collective worship, as well as trips out to the local church, park and library. Residential trips have continued throughout the pandemic underlining leaders' ambitions to broaden horizons and raise aspirations.

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

Pupils achieve well from the early years through to the end of Year 6. Leaders continually refine and improve their ambitious curriculum. Knowledge and skills build progressively year by year. Leaders check that learning in Nursery and Reception prepares children effectively for what they are taught in key stage 1. In turn, pupils are ready for more complex, deeper learning in key stage 2. Leaders want every pupil to reach their full potential.

In mathematics, teachers make sure all pupils, including those in the early years, begin to learn the important concepts. Pupils confidently use and apply their knowledge of number to solve problems and can explain their reasoning. Pupils remember what they have been taught and use this to help them learn new things. However, there is more to do. Leaders and teachers do not use assessment consistently or well enough. For example, it is not used to check for secure understanding or identifying misconceptions before moving on. Leaders are aware and have plans to address this.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) achieve well. This is because leaders identify individual needs quickly and respond skilfully. Staff get to know children in the early years quickly. They rapidly identify and respond to pupils' changing needs as they move up through the school. The flexible and well-considered support has helped to create a positive environment where pupils are ready to learn alongside their peers.

Leaders prioritise reading. In the early years, staff are relentless in focusing on developing children's early communication and language. Teachers and support staff have received effective training following the recent introduction of a new phonics programme. Staff confidence and expertise is making a positive difference to pupils. Staff accurately assess pupils' phonics and reading skills in a timely manner. This helps staff ensure that all pupils read books that match their phonics understanding and develop their fluency. Teachers are developing pupils' confidence, and their vocabulary. They check pupils' understanding of what words mean.

Pupils behave well because staff model and praise the positive behaviour they expect. Systems for rewarding and challenging pupils are consistently used and applied across the school. Attitudes to learning are consistently strong. Pupils socialise happily at playtimes, move around the school sensibly and are very polite. They are proud of how kind and welcoming their school is. Attendance of pupils has remained high because of the strong oversight and support provided by committed staff.

Work to develop pupils' character and sense of responsibility is a strength. Pupils learn how to look after their bodies and minds as well as how to keep themselves safe. They build on this by considering how to look after others and to be a good friend. Pupils are skilfully taught about difference, diversity and tolerance. They enjoy discussing their ideas and deepening their understanding of the world around them.

The trust and local governors have an accurate view of the school's strengths and priorities. Both groups work effectively to challenge and support the school. Local governors are knowledgeable and skilled. They work very well alongside ambitious leaders to develop clear strategic plans and check that these are working as intended. Staff are proud to be part of the team and enjoy working at this school. Staff value that leaders are considerate of their workload and well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff are very well trained to accurately identify any potential issues promptly. They understand the school's rigorous systems and use them effectively. Leaders' record-keeping is comprehensive and well organised. Leaders ensure that they share relevant information with the other schools and professionals in the community. Governors purposefully check and challenge all aspects of the school's safeguarding work. For example, they make sure the right checks are in place when staff are recruited. Leaders secure any necessary additional support for pupils and their families swiftly, working effectively with external agencies. Leaders keep issues under constant review and understand the local community well.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In mathematics, teachers do not check pupils' understanding systematically. This means that pupils' misconceptions are not accurately identified to provide important feedback or inform future teaching to address issues. Leaders should monitor whether teachers are using a range of assessment information and techniques to help pupils check and use knowledge securely before moving on.

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 first section 8 inspection since we judged the predecessor school, Northbourne Church of England Primary School, the school to be good in June 2015.

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	144688
Local authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	10226987
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	310
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Kathy Winrow
Headteacher	Paul Shaughnessy
Website	www.northbourne.oxon.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Northbourne Church of England Primary School converted to become an academy in January 2018. When its predecessor school, also called Northbourne Church of England Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted it was judged to be good overall in 2015.
- The school is an Academy with a Designated Religious Character and received its last section 48 inspection in February 2017. The school's next inspection is due in 2022/23.
- There is a breakfast club run on site and managed by the school.
- There is an after-school provision run on site and managed by an independent provider.
- There is a nursery provision at the school which has children aged from three years old.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspector carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the first routine inspection the school has received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector held meetings with the headteacher, deputy headteacher and the special educational needs coordinator. The inspector met with five governors, including the chair of governors. The inspector held separate meetings with two representatives from the Oxford Diocesan Schools Trust, and a representative from the Oxford Diocese.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in reading, mathematics and art and design. For each deep dive, the inspector discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, 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 heard some pupils read.
- The inspector reviewed documentation, including leaders' self-evaluation of the school and school improvement plans.
- To inspect safeguarding, the inspector reviewed a range of documentation, including the school's recruitment checks and records of concerns about child protection. The inspector met with the designated safeguarding lead. The inspector also spoke with pupils and staff about safety and child protection.
- The inspector took account of parents' responses to Ofsted's survey, Ofsted Parent View, and parents' written comments. The inspector also talked with parents on the morning of the second day of inspection.
- The inspector gathered pupils' views throughout the day, including during lesson visits as well as at lunchtime.
- The inspector met with a range of staff to gather their views about the school and took account of responses to Ofsted's confidential staff survey.

Inspection team

Gareth Flemington, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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