

# Inspection of Combe CofE Primary School

Church Walk, Combe, Witney, Oxfordshire OX29 8NQ

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Inspection dates: 6 and 7 July 2022

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Good</b>
Personal development	<b>Good</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Early years provision	<b>Good</b>
Previous inspection grade	Outstanding

This school was last inspected 14 years ago and judged 'Outstanding' under a previous inspection framework. This reflected the school's overall effectiveness under the inspection framework in use at the time.

From then until November 2020, the school was exempted by law from routine inspection, so there has been a longer gap than usual between inspections. Judgements in this report are based on the current inspection framework and also reflect changes that may have happened at any point since the last inspection.

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils and staff are proud to be members of their kind, happy and welcoming school. Leaders encourage pupils to embody the school's values of 'community, compassion and wisdom'. Pupils enjoy an interesting range of after-school clubs. These include outdoor learning, sporting, creative and musical activities.

Leaders and staff have high expectations of pupils' learning and behaviour. Children in early years take care of their environment and each other. They rejoice in talking about their ideas and are curious about the world around them. Incidents of bullying are rare, and pupils feel safe. Pupils know that staff are always on hand to help them sort out any concerns or upsets quickly.

Pupils form strong friendships. They learn to take responsibility for themselves and others. Pupils make positive contributions in school and to the local community. For instance, they write letters to elderly residents, organise stalls at the school fete and look after the school allotment.

Parents appreciate the care and support that leaders and staff provide. As one parent commented, 'Our children are thriving. The dedicated staff team strive to create a wonderful learning environment for our children.'

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

Leaders' work to bring about important improvements in the school's curriculum has been successful. They have rightly prioritised learning to read and built a strong personal, social and emotional development programme. They have high ambitions and are clear that every pupil, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), should leave full of self-confidence and ready for the next stage of their education.

Pupils follow a rich, well-crafted curriculum. It provides teachers with information on the order in which pupils should learn and remember important knowledge and vocabulary. In most subjects, clear end points are set out and understood by staff. However, in a few subjects and areas of learning, the key knowledge that pupils are intended to learn is not thought through carefully enough. This means that some pupils do not learn as well as they could. Leaders' work to address this is effective and starting to make a difference.

In the early years and subjects such as mathematics and history, teachers check carefully what pupils know and remember. Teachers use this information well and adapt learning to help pupils catch up quickly. Leaders identify pupils with SEND accurately. They ensure that staff know the needs of these pupils and how to address these. For instance, teachers skilfully adjust activities to help pupils with SEND learn alongside their peers. Leaders ensure that pupils who require more specialist support have access to the appropriate external professionals.

Right from the start, children in Reception class begin to learn phonics. Staff in the early years and key stage 1 are well trained to deliver the school's phonics programme. They ensure that the books pupils read help them practise the sounds that they learn in lessons. As a result, the youngest children learn their sounds well and older pupils continue to confidently build their knowledge and skills through key stage 1. Leaders have identified that staff do not support pupils' learning of phonics as effectively in key stage 2. Consequently, some of the weakest readers in the older year groups do not learn to read fluently and confidently as quickly as they could.

Pupils behave well in class and around school. They are motivated in lessons and demonstrate positive attitudes to their work. There is rarely any disruption to learning. When moving around the school and in the playground, all pupils, including those in early years, show great self-discipline.

Leaders have created a fully inclusive culture where pupils embrace difference and value everyone equally. As one pupil said, 'Everyone matters in our school, we are one big family and no one gets left out.' Leaders make sure that pupils discuss, debate and understand a broad range of topics. For example, pupils talk maturely and knowledgeably about healthy relationships. They learn to care about the school and local environment, talking expertly about how to help reduce pollution in a local river. They benefit from a broad range of visits and visitors. Older pupils take their leadership roles seriously and are proud to be school counsellors or house captains.

Governors work with and challenge school leaders effectively. They visit the school regularly. This helps them to make wise decisions about the use of school resources to improve the quality of education. Staff appreciate the care taken by leaders to support them with their workload and well-being.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure all staff are well trained to identify and refer safeguarding concerns. Consequently, staff are knowledgeable and alert to the slightest signs that could indicate that a pupil may be at risk. Leaders respond to concerns in a timely fashion. They work well with external agencies to ensure that pupils are safe and have the help they need. Leaders carry out rigorous checks on staff who work in school.

Pupils know how to keep safe, including when online. Pupils learn about healthy relationships and how to look after their safety and welfare.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- Curriculum thinking in a few subjects and areas of learning is still being refined. Where it is weaker, pupils do not learn as well as they could. Leaders must ensure that this work is completed and that all staff understand the important knowledge

that pupils should learn and remember over time.

- The school's approach to early reading in key stage 2 is not well embedded. This means that some of the weakest readers in the older year groups do not learn to read confidently and fluently. Leaders need to ensure that staff who teach pupils to read in key stage 2 are well trained and have the knowledge to support pupils effectively.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	123116
<b>Local authority</b>	Oxfordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10228567
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	113
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Martha O'Curry
<b>Headteacher</b>	Rachel Joannou
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.combeprimary.co.uk">www.combeprimary.co.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	29 April 2008

## Information about this school

- The majority of the school's staff and governors, including the headteacher and chair of governors, have changed since the last inspection.
- Combe Primary School is a voluntary controlled Church of England school. The most recent section 48 inspection took place on 4 July 2017.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.

## Information about this inspection

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

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher and other senior leaders. The lead inspector met with a group of governors, including the chair of governors. He also held two separate meetings with an officer from Oxfordshire local authority and a representative from the Diocese of Oxford.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, history and art. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers and teaching assistants, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at a sample of pupils' work. The lead inspector also heard pupils read.
- To inspect safeguarding, inspectors reviewed a wide range of safeguarding documentation, including the school's record of recruitment checks. The lead inspector met with the designated safeguarding leads. Inspectors also spoke with pupils and staff.
- Inspectors took account of parents' responses to the questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View, and parents' written comments. An inspector also spoke to groups of parents on the morning of the first day of inspection.
- Inspectors gathered pupils' views throughout the day, including during lesson visits and at lunchtime. Inspectors also considered the responses to Ofsted's pupil questionnaire.
- Inspectors met with a range of staff to gather their views about the school and took account of their responses to Ofsted's confidential staff questionnaire.

### **Inspection team**

Alan Derry, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Rachel Goplen

Ofsted Inspector

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