

Inspection of a good school: Stoke Bruerne Church of England Primary School

Bridge Road, Stoke Bruerne, Towcester, Northamptonshire NN12 7SD

Inspection date: 31 January 2023

Outcome

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

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils and staff describe this school as one big family. Teachers are on the gate each morning to welcome the pupils into this small school. Pupils, parents and carers can share any worries or concerns at the start of the day so that pupils can get off to a good start. This is a school in which pupils feel safe and happy.

There are high expectations of pupils. Pupils know that teachers do not tolerate poor behaviour or bullying. Pupils are kind to each other and play well together. At lunchtime, it is common for older pupils to plan activities such as 'giant snakes and ladders' and obstacle courses so that all pupils can benefit from these activities.

Pupils are proud to wear their gold medals, which show they have earned 'VIP' status for the month by performing academically or demonstrating a school value. All children and pupils benefit from undertaking the 'Mini Duke' and 'Junior Duke' award. This helps them develop new talents and interests.

Parents are in overwhelming agreement that they would recommend this caring and inclusive school. As one parent put it, 'This is a small school, with a big heart.'

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

Leaders have ensured that the curriculum is broad and ambitious for all pupils. They have continued to adapt and change parts of the curriculum so that lessons are logically sequenced. This is to help pupils build their understanding towards more complex concepts in each subject. There are still some subjects where the sequencing of the essential knowledge is not precise enough. In these subjects, lessons do not always build well towards the ambitious end points in the curriculum. Pupils' understanding is not as deep as it could be as a result.

Teachers present information in a way that does not overload pupils' memory. This allows pupils to retain much of this information and use it for future learning. Teachers generally have good subject knowledge. They check pupils' understanding well. This helps many pupils achieve across the curriculum. On occasions, teachers do not use activities and resources effectively enough. As a result, pupils do not consistently produce high-quality work across all subjects.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) benefit from studying the full curriculum. Leaders ensure that they identify pupils' needs and adapt resources and teaching so that pupils with SEND can achieve. Strategies to help pupils overcome their barriers to learning are shared with teachers.

Leaders have prioritised reading. They know this unlocks a pupil's potential to learn across the curriculum. Children start to learn to read as soon as they start in the Reception Year. Teachers follow the sequence of learning precisely to teach pupils to read. They regularly assess pupils to ensure that pupils know the sounds that letters make. Pupils read every day. The books that pupils read and take home match closely to the sounds they know. Not all adults are fully trained to be early reading experts. On occasions, strategies to teach pupils reading are not as effective as they could be.

Older pupils continue to develop their love of reading. Teachers ensure that there are opportunities to read for pleasure. Leaders have picked a range of books that all pupils read as part of the curriculum. These books expose pupils to different genres as well as diverse authors. Most recently, pupils have enjoyed reading 'The Girl of Ink and Stars'. Pupils reflect on this reading from both cultural and moral standpoints.

Children in the early years get off to a good start. Curriculum planning, adult interaction and a well-organised environment ensure that children develop across all areas of learning. Children become more resilient and independent. Adults prepare children well for the next stage.

The school is calm and orderly. Pupils are respectful and polite. Pupils engage well in lessons and show positive attitudes. Teachers support pupils to behave well.

The curriculum develops pupils' understanding of different cultures and faiths. Pupils talk confidently about how they understand and respect that some people will have different beliefs to their own. Pupils develop an understanding of British values. Leaders plan extra-curricular activities, including residential visits, so that all pupils benefit from experiencing what is beyond the local community.

There is growing leadership capacity at this school. Staff are very proud to work at this school. They are of the opinion that leaders consider their workload and well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have trained staff well to know the signs that might indicate that a pupil may be at risk. Staff know the procedures to report and record concerns they have about pupils.

Leaders respond swiftly to safeguarding concerns. The actions they take are appropriate. Leaders keep detailed records of all concerns and actions to protect pupils.

Pupils are confident of reporting their worries and concerns to trusted adults who they know will help them.

Those responsible for governance are fully aware of their statutory responsibility for safeguarding. They monitor policies and procedures for safeguarding effectively.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have not ensured that the essential knowledge is sequenced precisely as well as it could be in some subjects. Lessons do not always build well towards the ambitious end points in the curriculum. Pupils' understanding is not as deep as it could be. Leaders must ensure that the essential knowledge that allows pupils to gain a depth of understanding is more precisely sequenced.
- On occasions, teachers do not use activities and resources to promote learning well enough. As a result, some pupils do not produce high-quality work across the curriculum. Leaders must ensure that all teachers use the most effective pedagogical approach across all subjects.
- Not all staff are early reading experts. As a result, on occasions the teaching of reading is not as effective as it should be. Leaders should ensure that staff are all trained in the school's effective approach to teaching reading.

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 an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in 2013.

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.

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	121992
Local authority	West Northamptonshire
Inspection number	10240889
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	66
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Daniel Lister
Executive Headteacher	Eliza Hollis
Website	www.forestfederation.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	11 July 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The religious character of the school was inspected under section 48 of the Education Act 2005 in June 2016.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.
- The school is federated with four other schools. They share an executive headteacher and one governing body.

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 leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, the inspector discussed the curriculum with leaders, visited lessons, spoke with teachers and pupils and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The lead inspector listened to a sample of pupils in key stages 1 and 2 reading to a familiar adult.

- The lead inspector scrutinised the work pupils had produced for a range of other subjects.
- Inspectors met with leaders responsible for: behaviour; personal development; the early years foundation stage; and the provision for pupils with SEND.
- Inspectors met with groups of pupils from key stages 1 and 2.
- The lead inspector met with the safeguarding leaders to discuss the actions taken to keep pupils safe. He reviewed a range of documents related to safeguarding, including the school's single central record.
- The lead inspector reviewed a range of documents, including the school's self-evaluation and improvement plan.
- The lead inspector met with the local governing board.
- The lead inspector spoke with representatives of local authority.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View, and considered the results of the Ofsted staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Rakesh Patel, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

John Lawson

Ofsted Inspector

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