

Inspection of an outstanding school: Knowl Hill Church of England Primary Academy

Bath Road, Knowl Hill, Reading, Berkshire RG10 9UX

Inspection date:

3 February 2023

Outcome

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of outstanding as a result of this ungraded (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might not be as high if a graded (section 5) inspection were carried out now. The next inspection will therefore be a graded inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy coming to this warm and welcoming community. They get on well with their friends and teachers. Pupils feel safe and well cared for. This is because adults who work at the school address any concerns that pupils have or issues that arise, such as bullying, effectively.

Staff set high expectations for pupils' achievement and behaviour. Pupils enjoy learning and concentrate hard on their work, but they are not always helped to achieve as well as they might. They are extremely polite and respectful. Pupils behave well in lessons and at playtimes. There is a calm and purposeful atmosphere around the school.

Pupils appreciate the broad selection of clubs that staff provide. These range from choir to sewing club. Pupils also enjoy regular educational trips. For example, pupils added to their historical knowledge when visiting Windsor Castle. Pupils learn wider skills, including how to plan events by taking on roles such as those of worship leader or reading ambassador.

Parents and carers appreciate the support the school provides for their children. There is a strong sense of community. Pupils, parents and staff are proud to be part of the school and work well together to, 'Encourage one another and build each other up', as the school's vision states.

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

Leaders have identified the key knowledge that they want pupils to learn and remember by the time they finish each academic year. This starts in early years. The curriculum is ambitious and well sequenced, including for pupils with special educational needs and/or

disabilities (SEND). It builds pupils' knowledge and vocabulary gradually. Pupils can talk confidently about their learning and explain key words learned in different subjects. Pupils make connections between what they are learning and what they already know. This strengthens their understanding. However, teachers' subject knowledge is not strong enough in some areas of the curriculum. As a result, pupils do not learn consistently well in every subject.

Teachers present learning in an interesting way. This encourages pupils to become engrossed in their learning and makes them curious and enthusiastic to know more. This means that there is very little low-level disruption during lessons. Teachers break down essential knowledge into small steps for pupils so that they build on what they have learned previously.

Teachers mostly use assessment information effectively. This helps staff to know that pupils' knowledge is secure before moving on to new learning. However, sometimes, when pupils make mistakes or do not understand what they are learning, they are not supported effectively enough to know where they have gone wrong. Staff in the Reception class know how well children are achieving. This helps teachers and support staff to set demanding activities in the classroom and in the well-planned outside area.

Leaders place a strong emphasis on reading. Pupils get off to a positive start in learning to read very soon after they begin in the Reception class. Effective training has enabled staff to teach phonics well. Leaders and teachers ensure that support for pupils who find reading hard helps them to keep up with the school's expectations. This extra help also enables pupils to catch up if they have fallen behind. Leaders use assessment carefully to select the books that pupils read. Books are matched to the sounds that pupils know. As a result, pupils develop into confident and fluent readers.

Leaders ensure that training and guidance help staff to identify pupils' needs correctly. Pupils with SEND receive effective support to help them access their learning in the full range of subjects. This helps them to make good progress through the curriculum.

Staff broaden pupils' understanding of the world and themselves. Pupils learn about democracy when they vote for their classmates to be representatives on the school council or the eco-council. Through the curriculum, pupils have a good knowledge of a range of faiths and cultures. They learn about diversity in their own community and further afield. These events prepare pupils for the next stage in their education and their adult life. Parents appreciate how the school supports their children's well-being. One parent, reflecting the views of others, described the school as a 'wonderfully nurturing environment'.

Senior leaders consider the well-being and workload of staff thoughtfully. Leaders provide time for staff to work with the other schools in the trust. This supports teachers with tasks such as planning the curriculum.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have developed a strong culture of safeguarding. They understand their responsibilities. Leaders make sure that staff know the risks that pupils may face. Leaders plan training that ensures that all staff report concerns promptly and accurately, following the school's policy. They work closely with external agencies so that pupils and their families get the help they need. Leaders ensure that staff and visitors are vetted and are safe to work with children. Trustees and governors maintain good oversight of safeguarding arrangements. They check on safeguarding procedures carefully. Staff help pupils to know how to keep safe in the community and when online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, teachers' subject knowledge is not secure enough. As a result, pupils do not achieve as well as they could across all subjects. Leaders should provide effective support to improve teachers' subject knowledge so that they are able to implement the curriculum to a consistently high standard.
- Pupils' misunderstandings are not always identified and addressed quickly enough. This means that pupils' misconceptions continue. Leaders must ensure that all adults have the expertise to identify and correct errors swiftly and effectively, so that pupils develop a secure understanding in every subject.

Background

When we have judged a school to be outstanding, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains outstanding. 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 first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be outstanding in March 2017.

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

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| Unique reference number | 141295 |
| Local authority | Windsor and Maidenhead |
| Inspection number | 10256423 |
| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Academy sponsor-led |
| Age range of pupils | 4 to 11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 122 |
| Appropriate authority | Board of trustees |
| Chair of trust | Gordon Joyner (Acting Chair) |
| Headteacher | Nichole Bourner |
| Website | www.knowlhillschool.co.uk |
| Date of previous inspection | 21 and 22 March 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 |

Information about this school

- The school's next section 48 Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools for schools of a religious character is due in the next two years. The most recent inspection of this type took place in February 2016.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school had 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 met with the headteacher, a curriculum leader, subject leaders and the special educational needs coordinator. An inspector had a meeting with governors, including the chair of the governing body, and a trustee.
- The lead inspector had a telephone call with a representative from the diocese.
- Inspectors spoke with staff to discuss workload, well-being and safeguarding.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, inspectors 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 inspectors also looked at curriculum information and pupils' work in other subjects.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils about their views on the school, including their thoughts on learning and behaviour.
- Documentation relating to safeguarding was evaluated by inspectors. This included the single central record.
- Inspectors took account of the 48 responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. Inspectors also reviewed the seven responses to the pupil survey and the 12 staff survey responses.

Inspection team

Richard Blackmore, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Cathy Reid

Ofsted Inspector

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