

Inspection of a good school: Barkston and Syston CofE Primary School

Church Street, Barkston, Grantham, Lincolnshire NG32 2NB

Inspection date:

28 February 2023

Outcome

Barkston and Syston CofE Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

This school is a welcoming, inclusive school where everyone is respected and valued. Pupils say they are happy to come to school. They attend well. They enjoy learning across a broad range of subjects. Pupils are well prepared for their next steps in education.

Pupils say they feel safe when they are in school. They know that the adults care about them. They know who to talk to if they have any worries or concerns. Pupils know that adults will help them sort out any difficulties they may have. Incidents of bullying are rare, and staff deal with them quickly.

Pupils are respectful towards peers and adults. Pupils say that it is important to be kind. They know and understand the high expectations of their behaviour. They behave very well.

Some pupils take on roles of responsibility. Pupils who are playground leaders say that they enjoy teaching the younger pupils to play new games. Pupils know and understand the school's values. Pupils say a strength of the school is that 'everyone respects the values'.

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

Leaders have developed a curriculum that matches the requirements of the national curriculum. Leaders have set out the knowledge and skills that pupils must learn at each point in the year. Leaders have thought carefully about how to teach their two-year rolling programme. Teachers plan lessons that build on what pupils have learned before. Pupils revisit and practise important knowledge before they move on to learning new things. However, the programme for some subjects is relatively new. In these subjects, leaders are continuing their work to fully develop the curriculum.

Staff teach phonics and early reading well. In early years and key stage 1, a structured and systematic approach enables pupils to master phonics accurately. Staff have received extensive training and have high levels of expertise. Leaders ensure that pupils who need

extra support get it promptly. Pupils quickly build confidence and become fluent readers. Reading is a priority for school leaders. There is a new library. Staff celebrate their love of books, and pupils can 'read with a relative'.

The mathematics curriculum is logically ordered and coherently planned. Pupils gain knowledge as they move through the school, building on what they have learned before. Children in the early years make a strong start learning about numbers. Teachers choose appropriate activities and resources to support younger children well.

Teachers use assessment effectively in lessons to know what pupils have learned. They use assessment at the beginning and end of units of work to identify what pupils have remembered. However, this information is not used to address gaps in learning. As a result, some pupils develop misconceptions and do not learn the intended curriculum.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities learn and achieve well alongside their peers. Teachers adapt the curriculum effectively to meet these pupils' needs. Support staff work well with these pupils to help them overcome challenges and access their learning.

The school's values underpin all activities in school. Children and adults refer to the values regularly. Pupils know their importance. Pupils speak confidently about respecting each other and kindness. They understand how the values are important in school and the wider world.

Leaders provide pupils with opportunities to learn about different faiths through the curriculum and assemblies. Pupils learn about the law and what is meant by right and wrong. However, leaders have not ensured that pupils have opportunities to fully learn about diversity and equality.

Staff say they feel valued members of a motivated and respected team. Staff appreciate the efforts that leaders make to manage their workload and well-being. Many parents and carers said their children are happy at school. Some parents would like better communication between school and home.

Those responsible for governance are well informed and understand their role.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure that a strong culture of safeguarding underpins the work of the school. Staff know pupils and their families well. Staff receive regular training to ensure they are up to date with statutory guidance. They are swift to act on any concerns. Leaders work well with external agencies to ensure that pupils receive the help that they need. Leaders carry out appropriate checks on adults before they start working with pupils.

Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe, for example when in the community and when online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders and teachers do not use assessment consistently to inform next steps in learning or to identify key gaps in pupils' knowledge. Staff do not address misconceptions or gaps in pupils' learning consistently. Leaders must ensure that teachers use assessment information to enable pupils to know more and remember more of the intended curriculum.
- Pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to learn about diversity and equality. They are not as well prepared as they need to be for life in modern Britain. Leaders need to ensure that pupils have appropriate opportunities to develop a secure understanding of diversity and equality to be better prepared for life in modern Britain.

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 February 2014.

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	120689
Local authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	10268836
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	90
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Cora Townson
Headteacher	Rebecca Lyon
Website	www.barkstonsyston.lincs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	24 January 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The headteacher took up her post in September 2019.
- The school does not make use of 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 leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspectors met with the headteacher, other leaders and members of staff. The inspectors met with a governor.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics and geography. For each of these subjects, the inspectors held discussions with subject leaders, visited lessons, spoke with teachers and pupils and looked at pupils' work. The inspectors listened to pupils reading.
- The inspectors reviewed a range of documents, including the school improvement plan, various policies and curriculum planning.

- The inspectors observed breaktimes and lunchtime. Inspectors spoke to a range of staff and pupils.
- The inspectors spoke with safeguarding leaders, pupils and staff about the school's work to keep pupils safe. Inspectors reviewed safeguarding records and the single central record.
- The inspectors spoke with parents and considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments.

Inspection team

Donna Chambers, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Helen Williams

Ofsted Inspector

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