

Inspection of a good school: The Kirkby-la-Thorpe Church of England Primary School

Church Lane, Kirkby-la-Thorpe, Sleaford, Lincolnshire NG34 9NU

Inspection date:

14 March 2023

Outcome

The Kirkby-la-Thorpe Church of England Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are kind and tolerant at this school. They show a great enthusiasm for learning. Leaders have developed these character traits in pupils through explicit teaching of the school's 'KLT values'. Every week, in the Friday assembly, teachers celebrate those pupils who have gone above and beyond in demonstrating these values. Pupils are proud to receive the Steven's Cup in recognition of this.

Staff have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Adults develop children's ability to self-regulate well from the early years. These high expectations help pupils to learn well. Pupils show strong attitudes to learning.

Pupils know what bullying is. They know that 'STOP' means bullying is 'several times on purpose' and, if it happens they should 'start telling other people'. Pupils are confident in reporting bullying and they know teachers will deal with it.

The overwhelming majority of pupils, staff, parents and carers suggest that this is a school in which pupils are safe and happy. Many pupils and parents would recommend the school. One parent summed up the views of many when they said: 'The school exceeds expectations and has supported my child to develop well, with a holistic approach to his education.'

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

Leaders have ensured that pupils at this school benefit from studying a broad and ambitious curriculum. In all subjects, leaders have considered the concepts that pupils must understand. Leaders have identified the knowledge that will allow pupils to build their understanding. This knowledge is logically ordered so that pupils build on what they know.

Leaders have invested in developing staff's subject knowledge. When this is strong, the teaching of the curriculum is highly effective. Pupils know and remember more as a result. For example, in mathematics, teachers use their expert knowledge to model ideas carefully. This careful presentation of information ensures that pupils are not overloaded with too much information. However, this is not consistently the case for all subjects. Some staff do not have the subject knowledge needed to teach some subjects as effectively as they could.

Teachers try to make learning memorable by linking it carefully to experiences. For example, pupils develop their understanding of sustainability and pollution by visiting the local waste centre. When studying the World Wars in history, pupils benefit from visiting the International Bomber Command Centre. This helps them to remember knowledge in their long-term memory. However, on occasions, their understanding of concepts in foundation subjects is not as detailed as it could be. Teachers do not assess pupils' knowledge in foundation subjects as effectively as they do in the core subjects.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) study the full curriculum. Leaders and teachers ensure that they support these pupils by adapting teaching. This helps pupils with SEND work towards the same aims as other pupils. Pupils with SEND achieve well.

Children start to learn to read as soon as they start the Reception Year. Pupils take books home for pleasure that they can share with their families. There is a programme of family learning sessions each term. This allows parents to understand the school's approach to teaching early reading. Teachers are early reading experts. They make sure that pupils develop their understanding of the alphabetic code. The books that pupils read allow them to apply this knowledge. As a result, pupils become fluent readers quickly. Story time engages pupils. It develops their love for reading.

Children in the early years get off to a good start. There is effective communication between teachers and parents. This aids transition. Adults help children learn through play. Children become independent. They also learn to take turns and work together well. Children are inquisitive. Adults use this to develop learning further. For example, when children listen to teachers read books in the Anna Hibiscus series, they are keen to know about mangoes and the climate in Africa. Teachers take this opportunity to develop children's understanding of the world.

Pupils develop a strong understanding of British values and equalities. The school prepares them well for life in modern Britain. Pupils accept and understand different faiths and cultures. They take up various responsibilities, including being a 'mini police officer' or a 'junior road-safety officer'. Pupils understand the school's rules. They behave very well in lessons and during unstructured times.

Staff are proud to work at this school. Leaders engage with all staff well and consider their workload and well-being. This further supports the positive environment which leaders have created at the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have ensured that all staff are well trained to recognise the signs that a pupil might need help. Staff are vigilant and report any changes in behaviour. They know this will help to build a bigger picture.

Leaders are swift to act on concerns about pupils. They hold detailed records of concerns and the actions taken to help pupils. Leaders work well with external agencies to help the families and pupils that need this support.

Governors understand their safeguarding responsibilities. They ensure that staff implement safeguarding policies and procedures effectively. This includes robust recruitment checks.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have not ensured that all staff have the appropriate level of subject knowledge to teach some subjects consistently well. The teaching of some subjects is not as effective as it could be. Leaders must ensure that all staff have the appropriate level of subject knowledge to teach these subjects as well as others.
- Teachers do not always assess how well pupils have remembered the essential knowledge in foundation subjects. Pupils sometimes do not develop as detailed an understanding as they could in these subjects. Leaders must ensure that teachers check that all pupils know and remember the most essential knowledge in foundation subjects.

Background

When we have judged 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 first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in September 2016.

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	140445
Local authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	10211512
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	117
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Andrew Parker
Headteacher	Katie Gravil
Website	www.kltprimary.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	13 and 14 September 2016, under section 5 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 March 2017.
- The school does not use 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.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in reading, mathematics and physical education. 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 leader 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.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View, and considered the results of the Ofsted staff and pupil questionnaires.

Inspection team

Rakesh Patel, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Alison Adair

Ofsted Inspector

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