

Inspection of a good school: Withycombe Raleigh Church of England Primary School

Withycombe Village Road, Exmouth, Devon EX8 3BA

Inspection dates:

21 and 22 March 2023

Outcome

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of good 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. Inspectors are recommending the next inspection to be a graded inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Withycombe Raleigh is a friendly and inclusive place to learn. Pupils are proud of their school. Staff and pupils work well together to achieve their vision of 'Growing happy, caring hearts and minds'. There is a nurturing ethos based on the school's Christian values. Pupils enjoy a wide range of extra-curricular activities beyond the classroom.

In most areas of the curriculum, leaders have high expectations of all pupils' learning. However, teachers are not clear on the expectations for phonics. As a result, some pupils do not learn to read as well as they should.

There are high expectations for behaviour. Staff are clear about how behaviour is managed. They provide effective support to deal with any pupils who present challenging behaviour. This ensures that pupils can learn without interruption most of the time. Bullying is extremely rare, but pupils are confident that if it did happen, it would be dealt with quickly.

There are strong relationships between pupils and staff. Pupils are well cared for and feel happy and safe. As a result, they enjoy coming to school.

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

Leaders have worked to strengthen the curriculum recently. They are determined to provide the very best education for pupils. In most areas, leaders have designed an ambitious curriculum for all pupils, including those who are disadvantaged and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). In the early years, children

experience all areas of the curriculum through carefully planned activities. Teachers check prior learning to help the most important knowledge stick in children's memory.

However, leaders know that some subject plans are in their infancy and are not yet fully in place. In these subject areas, teachers' subject knowledge is not yet secure. Pupils do not gain the same depth of knowledge as they do in other areas. In some curriculum areas, teachers help pupils to practise and remember prior knowledge and skills well. For example, in mathematics, pupils use 'flashback' activities to practise and remember key mathematical facts. These activities help pupils to know more and remember more well over time.

Leaders are not ambitious enough to help all pupils learn to read well. Leaders have developed a consistent approach to the teaching of phonics. Children are introduced to high-quality texts right from the start. Children start to learn to read as soon as they begin in Reception Year. Most pupils read well with fluency and accuracy. However, the teaching of the phonics programme is not ensuring that all pupils make the progress of which they are capable. This is because it is not always well matched to their needs, including for some pupils with SEND. Teachers are not clear about the expectations for pupils as they learn to read. As a result, some pupils struggle to read their books accurately or fluently. Some pupils do not catch up as quickly as they should.

Leaders expect pupils with SEND to learn the same curriculum as their peers. Staff know pupils and their individual needs well. They successfully adapt the curriculum and give them the right support to succeed, including in the early years. As a result, most pupils with SEND achieve well from their starting points. Specialist staff provide effective pastoral support for those with complex needs. This helps pupils to regulate their emotions and be ready to learn.

Behaviour is positive. There is a calm and respectful atmosphere around the school. Teachers use clear routines and have high expectations. Pupils feel that behaviour is managed fairly. Pupils are positive and show responsible attitudes towards adults and each other.

Pupils' wider development is a strength of the school. Leaders have a firm commitment to developing pupils to be ready for life in modern Britain. Pupils learn about other cultures, faiths and backgrounds well. Pupils learn about respect and understand that everyone should be treated equally. Pupils take on responsibilities with pride, including being a reading buddy for a younger pupil and being part of the ethos council. Parents value the variety of clubs, visits and trips which enrich the curriculum further. Leaders make sure there is something for everyone, whether this is 'wild tribe' or going sailing.

Governors have an accurate view of the school's strengths and priorities for improvement. They provide appropriate support and challenge to school leaders. Staff feel valued and well supported in their roles. They appreciate how leaders consider their workload and well-being. Staff are proud to work at the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Safeguarding is a whole-school priority. Staff know the importance of being alert to any concerns so that support can be given quickly.

Leaders make sure that staff are vigilant through regular and up-to-date training. Staff know what to do if they have a concern about a pupil. Leaders respond quickly when staff raise concerns about pupils. Recruitment checks are completed to ensure that adults are suitable to work in school.

Pupils feel confident about sharing concerns with a trusted adult in school. Pupils have a good awareness of keeping safe, including online safety.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The design of the phonics curriculum is not ambitious enough to help all pupils to learn to read well. Teachers lack the required clarity around expectations of pupils as they learn to read. As a result, pupils are not learning to read as well as they could. Leaders must ensure that the way the phonics programme is implemented meets the needs of all pupils.
- The design of the curriculum for some foundation subjects has not yet had the intended impact. As a result, pupils do not build a deep knowledge and understanding in these subjects. Leaders need to embed the planning for these areas so that pupils learn well across the curriculum.

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 July 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	113355
Local authority	Devon
Inspection number	10240499
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	616
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Sue Humphries
Headteacher	Emma Jones
Website	www.wrpschool.org
Date of previous inspection	19 April 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act

Information about this school

- The current headteacher was appointed in February 2020.
- The school is a voluntary-controlled Church of England primary school within the Diocese of Exeter.
- The most recent Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools took place in October 2015.
- The school is a three-form entry primary school.
- The school currently uses two unregistered alternative learning providers.

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 held discussions with the headteacher, governors, senior leaders and staff.
- The lead inspector held a phone conversation with a representative of the local authority.

- Inspectors reviewed documentation and spoke with leaders, staff and pupils to evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding. Inspectors looked at safeguarding records. Inspectors reviewed attendance records.
- The inspection team carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics and geography. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and considered samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors met with the special educational needs coordinator to consider the quality of provision for pupils with SEND.
- Inspectors observed the behaviour of pupils in classrooms and around school.
- Inspectors gathered parents' views by considering responses to Ofsted Parent View, including free-text comments from parents. They also reviewed the school's own parent and carer survey.
- Inspectors gathered the views of a range of pupils by considering the pupil survey and through discussions with pupils.
- Inspectors held discussions with staff and considered responses to the Ofsted staff survey.

Inspection team

Sarah Ryder, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Ian Robinson

Ofsted Inspector

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