

Inspection of a good school: Romsley St Kenelm's C of E Primary School

Bromsgrove Road, Romsley, Halesowen, West Midlands B62 0LF

Inspection dates:

28 and 29 March 2023

Outcome

Romsley St Kenelm's C of E Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

This village school is at the heart of the local community. Strong links with St Kenelm's Church underpin the school's warm, caring ethos. Pupils feel safe and valued. They are proud of their school and of the rich history of Romsley.

Staff set high expectations for pupils' learning. Pupils enjoy the challenge. They come into school ready to learn. They take pride in their work and achieve well.

Pupils treat each other with kindness and respect. They are taught to live by Christian values and the school rules of 'ready, respectful, safe'. This fosters a strong sense of right and wrong. Leaders provide effective support to any pupil who may need more help to behave. Pupils know that leaders listen and respond quickly if any incidents of bullying occur. Leaders' detailed records support this.

The curriculum at St Kenelm's is much more than lessons. Pupils benefit from a wide range of experiences, such as sport competitions, dance festivals and outdoor art days. They enjoy many after-school clubs. They look forward to outdoor learning opportunities, including forest school and using the 'daily mile' track. These activities help to develop pupils' wider interests and foster a sense of belonging.

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

From the start of Nursery, children are immersed in language-rich activities indoors and outdoors. They play with language using favourite stories such as Bear Hunt and build their knowledge of rhymes and songs. This fosters a love of learning and paves the way for their next steps.

Leaders have taken decisive actions to improve the way early reading is taught. They have introduced a new phonics programme and invested in matching early reading books to the sounds that pupils know. All teachers and teaching assistants have received appropriate training. Skilled reading leaders provide further support where needed. As a

result, phonics is taught consistently and pupils learn to read well. Through careful assessment, leaders ensure that any pupils who start to fall behind receive extra help. These pupils gain confidence and catch up quickly.

Pupils enjoy listening to teachers read aloud every day. This introduces pupils to language and ideas that they may not otherwise encounter. Pupils share book recommendations with their classmates and teachers. This fosters a love of reading across the school.

Leaders have designed a curriculum that builds pupils' subject knowledge and skills starting from the early years. This ensures that pupils remember the important knowledge that they need before moving on to more complex learning. For example, in a Year 6 geography study, pupils deepen their existing knowledge of the Greenwich Meridian by exploring different time zones in Africa. Pupils demonstrate positive attitudes to learning; lessons are rarely disrupted.

The mathematics curriculum is logically sequenced and implemented effectively. Pupils achieve well with an increasing number of pupils achieving strong outcomes. This starts in early years where children begin to secure a good understanding of number. They explore numbers through practical activities. They are encouraged to use precise mathematical language to talk about their thinking. They are well prepared for Year 1 and beyond.

In most subjects, staff use a variety of approaches to check how pupils are progressing. This includes informal checks during lessons and more formal tests. Assessment strategies are not as effective in some subjects. Teachers do not always check that pupils understand and remember important knowledge before moving on to more complex tasks or concepts.

Leaders work with a range of agencies to assess pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and identify appropriate support. Pupils with high levels of need are well integrated into school life and lessons. Leaders ensure that their individual plans are reviewed regularly so that targets are well-matched to needs. Some pupils with SEND receive extra support, daily or weekly, beyond the classroom. However, leaders do not check the impact of these different programmes. As a result, leaders do not have a clear enough picture of what is working well for these pupils and what could be improved.

Leaders place great importance on pupils' personal and wider development. Pupils speak confidently about world religions and different cultures. They value the regular visits from local police when they talk about important topics such as bullying and digital footprints. Pupils love their trips to places of interest such as the Dudley Canal and Caverns, the Botanical Gardens and local areas of interest and natural beauty.

Staff speak highly of the support and consideration they receive from leaders. They feel valued and say that leaders are mindful of workload.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is a strong safeguarding culture in this school. Staff are vigilant and fully trained. Everyone works together to make sure that those who need help are quickly identified. Leaders know the community well and are trusted by them. Records are meticulous. Leaders seek help from external agencies when needed and follow-up is rigorous.

The curriculum offers many opportunities for pupils to learn how to keep themselves safe. Pupils are confident to talk about any worries that they may have. They know who to go to for help. They say that teachers do everything to make sure that pupils have 'peace of mind'.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a small number of foundation subjects, leaders have not established effective ways of assessing how much pupils have learned. This means that teachers are unsure of how much pupils have understood and remembered before moving on to more complex tasks or concepts. Leaders should ensure that effective assessment methods are established in all subjects so that pupils can achieve the curriculum goals.
- Some pupils with SEND receive additional support beyond lessons. However, leaders do not assess the impact of these different programmes. As a result, leaders do not have a clear picture of what is working well for these pupils and what could be improved. Leaders should make sure that any additional provision being made for pupils with SEND is checked to ensure it is having a positive impact on learning.

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 first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in December 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

Unique reference number	116846
Local authority	Worcestershire
Inspection number	10257010
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	197
Appropriate authority	Local authority
Chair of governing body	Nicola Copitch
Headteacher	Suzanne Shackleton
Website	www.stkenelms.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	5 and 6 December 2017, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- This is a voluntary-controlled Church of England school. The school received its most recent section 48 Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) inspection on 7 December 2017. Section 48 inspections were suspended due to the COVID-19 pandemic. They restarted in September 2021. The next inspection will be within eight years of the last section 48 inspection.
- The school does not use alternative provision.
- The school runs a before- and after-school club.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in her evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, senior leaders, subject leaders and the leader of SEND.
- The inspector held a telephone conversation with a representative from the local authority and met with the chair and the vice-chair of the governing body.

- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and geography. For each deep dive, the inspector met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers and pupils, and looked at work in pupils' books.
- The inspector heard several pupils read. She met with groups of pupils to talk about their learning and life in school. She met with parents at the beginning of the school day.
- The inspector reviewed a range of documents, including the school's self-evaluation and plans for improvement. Records of attendance were checked.
- The inspector checked the school's single central record and safeguarding documentation.
- The inspector met with all staff to talk about the curriculum, their workload and the behaviour and personal development of pupils.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour at playtime and lunchtime and talked to them about behaviour, bullying and welfare.
- The inspector considered the responses to the online questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View, and 67 free-text responses. She gathered the views of pupils and staff on site through discussion with these groups and from their online questionnaire responses.

Inspection team

Marilyn Mottram, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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