

Inspection of Ruardean Church of England Primary School

School Road, Ruardean, Gloucestershire GL17 9XQ

Inspection dates: 28 and 29 March 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

At Ruardean, the school's Christian ethos of 'love of learning, love of life and love of one another' is embodied by all. Pupils enjoy playing a part in leadership roles such as leading collective worship. They perform plays that help pupils understand why the school's values are important.

Staff have high expectations of all pupils. Any pupils who require support with their learning get it quickly. Pupils respect each other. They listen intently to each other's ideas in lessons, for example when debating. Pupils play harmoniously on the playground. They say bullying is rare. It is swiftly dealt with if it happens. As a result, pupils feel safe at school.

From Reception Year, children support each other and cooperate. Leaders provide strong pastoral support to all pupils, including those in the Communication and Interaction Centre (CIC). The CIC is a nurturing provision. Leaders have created a calm learning environment with a curriculum that is well matched to pupils' needs. Parents say that staff 'are welcoming, caring and know the children well'.

Pupils' learning goes beyond the classroom. For example, they undertake geographical fieldwork in the local area, such as local archaeology digs. Pupils enjoy clubs such as sewing and gardening.

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

Leaders have prioritised the most urgent issues since the previous inspection. They have constructed a broad and well-sequenced curriculum for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Governors understand the priorities of the school and provide appropriate challenge to leaders. They make sound strategic decisions to improve the quality of education.

Leaders have planned an effective curriculum which identifies the precise knowledge pupils should learn. Many pupils can explain their learning well. Leaders have prioritised the development of communication and language. Staff model the language they expect children to use. In the early years, children develop a love of song and rhyme. Leaders have planned the mathematics curriculum, so it builds sequentially on prior learning. As a result, even though published outcomes for mathematics in 2022 were not strong, pupils now develop a firm understanding of mathematical concepts and learn well.

Pupils have a thorough understanding of the texts they read. Teachers model how to read. This helps pupils read fluently. Teachers explain why authors choose particular words. Pupils use the grammatical features and vocabulary they have learned in their writing lessons. However, pupils' writing in other subjects is not as strong.

Leaders have implemented the phonics programme effectively. Staff deliver consistent phonics teaching to all pupils. Books match the sounds pupils know. This helps them to read confidently and fluently. Staff use assessment well. They quickly spot and support any pupils who need help to keep up. Pupils, including children in Reception Year, spell accurately using the sounds they know. By the time pupils leave Ruardean, they are competent readers.

Leaders have created an inclusive culture. The CIC offers pupils with communication and language needs a space where they can thrive. Teachers plan the curriculum in small steps. It builds on previous knowledge and is as ambitious as the mainstream provision. Staff who work with pupils with SEND across the school know their needs well. They provide effective support to help pupils overcome barriers to learning. However, for a small minority of pupils, individual support plans lack precision. This impacts on their learning.

Staff check pupils' learning across the curriculum, including in the early years. They use these checks to prevent gaps arising in pupils' knowledge and misconceptions. This ensures that pupils' understanding improves over time. Staff use effective questioning to make children think. For example, in early years, children were asked what happens to a worm's food when it has eaten.

The personal development curriculum takes advantage of opportunities with the local church. For example, pupils participate in gardening activities and the local Christmas tree festival. Pupils also know about other world religions. They recognise the importance of respecting people with different beliefs. Pupils understand what democracy is and enjoy voting. Pupils have positive attitudes towards their learning. They take pride in their work.

Leaders provide staff with regular opportunities to develop their practice. This includes sharing ideas and learning from each other to enhance their teaching skills. Staff feel that leaders prioritise their workload and well-being. Consequently, staff are passionate about working at the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders train all adults so they know and can identify signs of harm. Staff know this information well because leaders provide regular updates. Adults refer any concerns to the relevant staff and agencies in line with the school's procedures. Leaders make sure any pupils who need support receive it quickly. They work effectively with external agencies.

Leaders conduct checks to ensure suitability of staff to work with children.

Pupils are taught how to stay safe, including when online. They talk knowledgeably about respecting personal space.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The targets teachers set for a minority of pupils with SEND are not precise enough. As a result, these pupils do not achieve as well as they should. Leaders should ensure that targets for all pupils with SEND are sharply focused on what pupils need so they can learn well.
- Leaders have not planned the curriculum to allow pupils to develop their writing fully across the curriculum. This means that some pupils are not achieving the same quality of written work in the wider curriculum as they do in English. Leaders should ensure that all teachers have high expectations for pupils' writing in all subjects.

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	115647
Local authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	10256701
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	85
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Daniel Beard
Headteacher	Simon Manning
Website	www.ruardeancofeprimaryschool.com
Date of previous inspection	19 and 20 March 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school has a specially resourced provision for pupils with SEND. All pupils in this class have education, health and care plans.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- The school is designated as having a religious character. Its last inspection under the Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools was in 2017, when it was judged good overall.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- 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 met with the headteacher, special educational needs coordinator, school staff, pupils, governors, a representative from the diocese and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and geography. 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 lead inspector listened to pupils read from Years 1, 2 and 3.
- Inspectors evaluated the effectiveness of safeguarding. They looked at the school's single central record and records of concerns, and at how staff work to keep pupils safe. The inspectors spoke to pupils, staff and governors about safeguarding practices.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school, including at lunch and break times. In addition, they met with pupils formally and informally to hear their views.
- Inspectors considered responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, including free-text responses. They also looked at responses to the pupil survey and responses to the staff survey.

Inspection team

Lakmini Harkus, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Andrew Evans

Ofsted Inspector

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