

Inspection of a good school: The Spalding St John the Baptist Church of England Primary School

Hawthorn Bank, Spalding, Lincolnshire PE11 1JQ

Inspection dates:

25 and 26 April 2023

Outcome

The Spalding St John the Baptist Church of England Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a very well led school where pupils love to learn. From milking a makeshift cow in Reception to building bridges in Year 4, pupils enjoy exciting and challenging learning activities. They are keen to share their enthusiasm for school life and their high opinion of their teachers.

Reception children can explain how to win 'skills' points for qualities such as teamwork and accepting challenge. This points system extends across the school, encouraging positive attitudes to learning.

Expectations of work and behaviour are high. Pupils strive to meet these high expectations and to model the school's values. These values thread through all aspects of school life. Pupils are very friendly and courteous. Living out the school mantra of 'ready, respectful and safe', pupils behave exceptionally well in class and around the school. There is a calm atmosphere throughout the school. Pupils feel safe and happy. They say that bullying happens very rarely and they trust staff to deal with it.

Parents are very pleased with the school. Parents say that their child is happy at school. One parent, typical of many, said; 'An amazing school. All staff are 100% supportive of the children.'

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

In recent years, leaders have redesigned the curriculum. It now meets the needs of all pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Leaders ensure that teachers have the expertise to deliver the curriculum well. This is consistent across the school. Teachers bring the curriculum to life for pupils. For example, in a design technology project, pupils produce their own spaghetti Bolognese meals. All

subjects are important at this school. Subject leaders have clearly defined what they want pupils to learn. They make the necessary checks to ensure that teachers are delivering the curriculum effectively. Pupils revisit knowledge to enable them to recall their learning. Teachers' checks on pupils' understanding are effective. Teachers plan lessons to address any knowledge gaps pupils may have.

The COVID-19 pandemic disrupted pupils' learning. The redesigned curriculum has not yet been fully embedded. As a result, the full impact of the new curriculum in raising standards is not yet evident in published data.

Children in Reception make a flying start across the different areas of learning. Staff know the children very well. They help children to learn new routines and to make the most of each activity. Staff make sure that all children practise important skills that will help them in the future. As a result, children are more than ready for Year 1 when the time comes.

Leaders place reading at the very heart of the curriculum. Children in Reception begin to learn phonics almost as soon as they arrive at the school. Leaders ensure that staff have the skills and experience to teach phonics well. Pupils receive the help they need to catch up. As a consequence, pupils learn to read quickly. Pupils make good use of the school library and value class story times. They love to read. As one pupil said, 'I can go to my happy place and imagine I'm in the story.'

Leaders identify pupils with SEND without delay. They work closely with external agencies to make certain that pupils get the support they need. Leaders have crafted the curriculum carefully to ensure that pupils with SEND do not miss out on any aspect of learning. This means that pupils with SEND access the same curriculum as their peers and do well.

Pupils have opportunities to broaden their horizons through a range of learning experiences. They take part in a variety of sports, including basketball and curling. Other clubs, including history detectives and sewing, further develop pupils' interests. Leaders encourage as many pupils as possible to take part in clubs. There are lots of opportunities for pupils to take responsibility. They serve in different roles, including as science and language ambassadors. The new 'Community Leaders' scheme helps to develop leadership and encourages pupils to care for others. Pupils learn about people from different backgrounds. They show high levels of respect for others. However, pupils' understanding of British values is underdeveloped.

Governors visit the school regularly. As a result, they have a full picture of what is happening and a clear vision for the future of the school.

Leaders consider staff workload and well-being when making decisions. Morale is high and staff are very proud to work at this school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders check that all adults who work in school are suitable to work with children. They provide all staff with regular training. As a result, staff understand the vital importance of safeguarding and report any concerns promptly.

Leaders are persistent in engaging the help of outside agencies, such as children's services. The school's pastoral team works very well to support pupils and their families.

Pupils learn how to stay safe online and in the wider world.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The redesigned curriculum has not yet been fully embedded. As a result, some pupils do not achieve as well as they could. Leaders should continue their work to embed the curriculum so that the impact is seen in all pupils reaching the highest standards of which they are capable.
- Pupils' understanding of British values is underdeveloped. Some pupils do not remember the British values they have been taught. Leaders should ensure that all pupils have an age-appropriate depth of understanding of the key British values.

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 December 2012.

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	120613
Local authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	10227227
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	436
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Michael Moriaty
Headteacher	Clare Robinson
Website	www.st-john.lincs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	1 February 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is a voluntary-aided Church of England school in the Diocese of Lincoln. The school's last section 48 inspection, for schools of a religious character, took place in October 2017, when the school received a judgement of outstanding.
- The current headteacher took up her post in January 2021.
- The school does not make use of any alternative providers.

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 their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, senior leaders, groups of staff, groups of pupils, the chair of governors and other members of the local governing body.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in the following subjects: early reading, mathematics, and design and technology. For each deep dive, the inspector discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, looked at samples of work and spoke to pupils about their learning.

- The inspector listened to pupils in Years 1, 2 and 3 read to an adult.
- The inspector considered how well the school protects pupils and keeps them safe, meeting with the safeguarding team to evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding measures. The inspector also scrutinised the school's single central record.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school site.
- The inspector spoke to parents at the school gates and considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, as well as the responses to staff and pupil surveys.
- The inspector reviewed a range of documents, including school improvement plans and minutes of the governing body.

Inspection team

Martyn Skinner, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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