

Inspection of a good school: Kintbury St Mary's C.E. Primary School

Gainsborough Avenue, Kintbury, Hungerford, Berkshire RG17 9XN

Inspection date: 4 May 2023

Outcome

Kintbury St Mary's C.E. Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils really enjoy being at this happy school. They feel that they are part of a community where everyone learns together and helps each other. For example, Year 6 pupils act as role models, taking time to help younger children learn to read. All pupils learn about the importance of giving to those who need help by raising money for charities chosen through a pupil vote. Importantly, pupils feel cared for. They know there is always a trusted adult with whom they can talk through any of their worries.

Leaders have high expectations of pupils' behaviour around the school. Pupils rise to this. They take pride in knowing the new '#KSM' school rules of being kind, safe and having good manners. These can be seen at break and lunchtimes when pupils play and eat together safely and courteously. Pupils have been taught to recognise bullying and say it is rare.

Pupils are curious about the world around them. They enjoy a wide range of opportunities, such as swimming and different outdoor activity residentials. Pupils learn about different traditions through events such as the May Day celebrations. Staff also ensure that the books pupils read explore many interesting people and places. This helps pupils to develop their understanding of diversity and the wider world.

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

The school's new leadership team has rapidly improved the school. This includes developing both the school's curriculum and the ways in which pupils are taught. Teachers value the changes that have been made, saying that they 'are blessed' to work at the school. They describe feeling supported, knowing leaders consider both their professional development and their welfare.

The school's redeveloped curriculum is starting to steadily build pupils' knowledge and skills. In lessons, teachers use a variety of strategies to help pupils learn. This includes

adapting learning, as needed, based on the detailed support plans provided for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. In some subjects, the improvements are helping pupils to confidently recall and describe what they have been taught. However, this is not yet consistent across the curriculum. Some of the activities selected by teachers do not always help pupils learn and then remember the specific content for that lesson. Additionally, what pupils do and do not understand is not consistently or carefully identified. Leaders are aware of these weaknesses and have clear plans in place to ensure that staff have the training needed to fully embed the ongoing improvements.

Leaders recognise that, previously, not all pupils learned to read as well as they should. The recently introduced phonics programme is helping to remedy this. Teachers and teaching assistants are all well trained to ensure they can regularly check pupils' progress right from when children start to learn to read in Reception. Leaders then diligently use this information to ensure that phonics teaching is closely matched to each pupil's needs. As a result of these improvements, as well as regular practise, many pupils are now more confident and fluent readers.

Reading is prioritised across the school. All classrooms have book displays, which are regularly refreshed from the library. In Reception, pupils enjoy many varied and interesting books with their classmates. Mathematics is emphasised in the play activities of pupils in Reception. Pupils develop their fine motor skills through carefully chosen activities. The school's varied play structures allow physical development through play and exploration.

The very positive behaviour of pupils is a strength of the school. Leaders know that clear structures and behaviour processes help pupils to focus and learn. In class, pupils work diligently. They are calm and friendly. Pupils respond well to the well-established routines, which helps them to know exactly what they should do.

Leaders have a clear plan: to help pupils gain broad experiences and build character. They are committed to ensuring that all pupils have varied opportunities. Leaders want them to learn a musical instrument, have a residential trip and experience different cultures. Pupils take part in a range of clubs and activities, such as knitting, judo and street dance. Leaders make sure that all pupils can join in by helping with cost or equipment where necessary.

School staff understand the school's central place in the community. Knowing parents well helps leaders provide support to families. Parents are invited into the school for events such as 'COOL' assembly and Lunch Club. Here, families share a meal and explore what the children are learning. Events such as these further strengthen the link between home and school. Parents are positive about their child's school experience, with one stating, 'This is a very happy school, with wonderful, approachable teachers.'

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders are fastidious in their safeguarding of pupils. They make sure they know as much detail as possible about incidents related to the safety and well-being of vulnerable pupils. Leaders record and analyse information so they can spot any potential patterns that may indicate a pupil is at risk. This means they can readily identify when action needs to be taken to protect individuals. When serious incidents affect pupils and their families, leaders seek advice and support from a range of agencies. They readily follow up on any external support to ensure families are getting the right support.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders' recent curriculum and pedagogical developments are not yet fully embedded. This includes the consistent selection of appropriate activity choices to help pupils confidently learn the intended curriculum, as well as the processes to check what pupils know and remember. As a result, some pupils do not learn as quickly as they could. Leaders must ensure that they check that all developments are securely in place and are having the impact they intend.

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 February 2018.

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	109967
Local authority	West Berkshire
Inspection number	10269149
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	137
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Alison Mitchell
Headteacher	Alison McDonald
Website	www.kintbury.w-berks.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	27 and 28 February 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Diocese of Oxford. The last Section 48 inspection of the school's religious character took place in March 2022.
- The current headteacher joined the school in January 2023.
- The school currently uses two registered alternative providers.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection of the school 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 meetings with the headteacher, assistant headteacher, special educational needs and disabilities coordinator, curriculum leaders, and teaching staff.
- Inspectors met with three governors, including the chair of governors. They talked to representatives from the local authority and the diocese.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and science. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum

plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to pupils about their learning, and looked at samples of pupils' work. An inspector also listened to a sample of pupils read.

- Inspectors examined a range of documentation provided by the school, including leaders' self-evaluation and improvement plans.
- Inspectors scrutinised safeguarding records, checked staff's safeguarding awareness and met with the designated safeguarding leaders.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View. They also took into consideration the responses to the confidential staff and pupil surveys.

Inspection team

Ed Mather, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Daniel Botting

His Majesty's Inspector

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