

# Inspection of a good school: Aston and Cote Church of England Primary School

Cote Road, Aston, Bampton, Oxfordshire OX18 2DU

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Inspection dates:

10 and 11 May 2023

## Outcome

Aston and Cote Church of England Primary School continues to be a good school.

## What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils thrive at this school. They feel happy and safe. Leaders have high aspirations about pupils' learning. They want pupils to be 'ASTONishing learners' who are aspirational, tenacious, independent, curious and hardworking. Pupils are keen to live up to these high expectations and try their best in lessons. They behave well both in class and around the school. Pupils understand the school's rules and treat each other with respect. They understand what bullying is. Pupils say that it is rarely a problem but staff would deal with it quickly if it did occur.

Parents are very complimentary about the school. One commented that, 'The school's extensive enrichment programme enables our children to shine and grow their talents, whether these are sporting, artistic or musical.' Pupils enjoy taking on increasing responsibility as they progress through the school. They value the opportunity to be house captains, playground pals, digital leaders, school councillors and STEM ambassadors.

Pupils enjoy school trips. Those in Year 3 were very excited about their recent visit to the Ashmolean Museum, where they learned about Ancient Egypt. The school community is charmed by Lottie, the therapy dog, who provides cuddles and joy to any pupil who needs cheering up.

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

The curriculum is ambitious across all subjects. The intent is to lay firm foundations for life-long learning by making learning engaging and motivating. From the Nursery Year, leaders have ensured that in most subjects, the essential knowledge that pupils should learn throughout the school is clearly set out. However, in a few subjects, leaders are yet to finalise their curriculum thinking about how and when knowledge needs to be taught.

Reading is a school priority. Staff are well trained in delivering the systematic phonics programme. This enables younger pupils, including those with special educational needs

and/or disabilities (SEND), to become confident and fluent readers. Older pupils enjoy their roles as reading ambassadors and they regularly listen to younger pupils read. Pupils develop a deep love of reading because staff provide engaging learning opportunities. For example, book week was based on the book 'A Midnight Fair'. The whole school was turned into a fairground with games such as chase the hoop. As a pupil said, 'The whole event was just so exciting.'

Teachers ensure that key concepts within subjects are delivered effectively. There are regular opportunities to develop and embed learning of important information. For example, in computing, pupils learn how to become increasingly confident working with algorithms. Disadvantaged pupils, including those with SEND, are well supported. Teachers carefully adapt the curriculum to meet their needs so they make effective gains in their knowledge and understanding. In most subjects, teachers assess carefully what pupils know and what they need to learn next. However, in a few subjects, this is still developing.

Children in the Nursery and Reception Years benefit from a large and well-provisioned environment. This enables children to explore all areas of learning both inside and outside. For example, in the Nursery, children were making their own Coronation crown with leaves and buttercups that they had collected from the school's forest area.

Leaders have ensured that there is a strong provision for pupils' broader development. The personal, social, health and economic education curriculum is effective in ensuring that pupils understand about their own needs as well as those of others. Pupils respect each other and learning is rarely disrupted by any low-level disruption. Leaders aim for pupils to develop a sense of awe and wonder about the world. There is a rolling programme of enrichment weeks, including an international week. This helps pupils to respect differences in the way that people live. It also gives pupils a deep understanding about global issues, such as pollution. Leaders are keen that pupils develop their confidence and sense of independence, for example through the residential trips in Years 2 and 6. Physical fitness has a high priority. There is an extensive sports programme with other schools. Pupils also make good use of the all-weather running track when completing the daily five-minute run.

Members of the governing body understand their responsibilities and statutory duties. They are successfully holding leaders to account for the quality of pupils' education. Staff are very positive about the school. They appreciate leaders' efforts to ensure that their workload and well-being are always taken into consideration.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is a strong culture of safeguarding across the school. Leaders ensure that staff access high-quality safeguarding training. Staff understand the procedures for reporting concerns. They report any concerns promptly.

Pupils, even the youngest in school, are taught how to stay safe. Older pupils attend a junior citizens scheme where they learn how to keep themselves and others safe in a variety of scenarios. Leaders are mindful that the school's rural location has specific dangers and pupils learn, for example, about the possible dangers from farm machinery.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- In a few subjects, leaders have not identified how and when key knowledge needs to be delivered. This means that pupils do not always fully develop their understanding in these subjects securely. Leaders should ensure that they finalise their curriculum thinking so that teachers have all the information they need to deliver these subjects effectively.
- In a minority of subjects, teachers do not check what pupils already know and remember. This means that staff do not always know how well pupils know important content. Leaders need to ensure that assessment is used effectively so staff know which knowledge is fully embedded and what needs further reinforcement.

## **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 June 2014.

## **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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	123106
<b>Local authority</b>	Oxfordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10268995
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	2 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	173
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Joe Cox and Kate Norton
<b>Headteacher</b>	Fiona Taylor
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.aston-and-cote.oxon.sch.uk">www.aston-and-cote.oxon.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	7 February 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- This is a Church of England primary school within the Diocese of Oxford. It was last inspected under section 48 of the Education Act 2005 in February 2023. The next section 48 inspection will be within eight years of that inspection.
- The school uses one registered alternative provider.
- Since the previous inspection, the school now has provision for two-year-olds as it has incorporated the on-site nursery.

## 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 carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and computing. For each deep dive, the inspector 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. Pupils across the school were observed reading to a familiar adult by the inspector.

- The inspector took account of parents' responses to Ofsted Parent View and their written comments. She also talked with groups of parents in the afternoon of the second day of inspection. The inspector met with a range of staff to gather their views about the school, and took account of staff's responses to Ofsted's confidential staff questionnaire.
- During the inspection, the inspector met with a range of pupils to discuss their views about the school and talked to them informally during social times. Pupil responses to Ofsted's confidential pupil questionnaire were also considered.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector checked the single central record of recruitment checks and talked to leaders responsible for safeguarding. She also talked to a range of staff and pupils informally.
- The inspector met with members of the governing body. She also had calls with the local authority and the alternative provision.
- The inspector reviewed a range of documentation, which included the school development plan and governing body minutes.

### **Inspection team**

Liz Bowes, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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