

Inspection of an outstanding school: Deerhurst and Apperley Church of England Primary School

Apperley, Gloucester, Gloucestershire GL19 4DQ

Inspection date:

18 July 2023

Outcome

Deerhurst and Apperley Church of England Primary School continues to be an outstanding school.

What is it like to attend this school?

'A truly special school which celebrates every part of a child,' and 'blown away with the care, experience and thought that goes into the school,' are views shared by many parents. They describe what it is like to be a pupil at this school. Pupils flourish, and are proud to be part of it. Staff care deeply for the children and pupils. They ensure children get the best possible start in life from the moment they start in the pre-school. Staff have high expectations of every pupil. As a result, pupils achieve extremely well.

Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. They fully understand the school's ethos, and the Christian values shine through. Pupils are supportive and caring of each other and are happy. They enjoy and appreciate warm relationships with staff. Pupils have a strong sense of belonging. This helps them feel safe.

Pupils relish the diverse range of wider opportunities available. These help to develop their interests and skills in many areas, including music and outdoor education. Pupils of all ages and abilities attend such activities frequently. The experiences pupils receive prepare them exceptionally well as they move into the next stage of their education.

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

The headteacher leads the school with passion and determination. She ensures that pupils learn an aspirational curriculum that has their needs at its heart. The quality of pupils' work is consistently of a high standard across all subjects. They talk about learning in depth and remember knowledge from previous years. For example, older pupils remember the importance of fair testing from learning science in key stage 1. They make links between learning in different subjects, including geography and art. Staff are meticulous in planning the curriculum. They carefully identify the key knowledge they

want pupils to learn. This ensures pupils learn and remember the right content at the right time.

Staff are not complacent. They continually reflect on, and tweak, areas of the curriculum so that it continues to improve. This ensures that pupils have the best chance to succeed in all subjects, not just in English and mathematics. Pupils identified with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) enjoy the same curriculum as their classmates. Staff adapt work carefully to allow pupils with SEND to experience success and achieve well.

Pupils are highly positive about their learning. They work hard in lessons. When needed, staff help pupils who face challenges to manage their behaviour superbly. This ensures that pupils learn without interruption.

Reading is a priority. Staff expect every pupil to be a fluent reader by the end of key stage 1. Children in the early years get off to a flying start. Staff have a sharp focus on developing children's language and communication from the beginning of pre-school. Reading books precisely match the sounds that children know. Staff become skilled in the teaching of reading. This means they quickly identify any child at risk of falling behind and provide the support they need to keep up. Staff promote a love of reading. Story time is a firm favourite. Pupils experience a wide range of stories. They can talk with eloquence about their favourite books. Pupils talk avidly about the importance of reading the 'blurb' to help them decide if they want to read a book.

Pupils' wider development is fundamental to the work of the school. The wealth of opportunities afforded to pupils is extensive and very much appreciated by them. Pupils gain an understanding of their community and the wider world by experiencing activities which include parliamentary workshops, talks on the economy, iSingPOP concerts and the Cheltenham Music Festival. Pupils talk with animation about the opportunity to develop their entrepreneurial skills by making products to sell at events. Such opportunities develop pupils' cultural capital, and they learn how to live and contribute positively to the wider world. The school's Christian foundation underpins pupils' spiritual and character development. Pupils are kind, thoughtful and well-mannered.

Governors know the school well. They provide a balance of support and challenge to staff, holding them to account for the quality of education.

The relationship among the adults who work in the school is harmonious. They unite in their belief that every pupil deserves the very best quality of education and care. Parents spoken to or who contributed via correspondence are overwhelmingly supportive of the school and all that the adults do to ensure their child receives an outstanding education.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have created a strong culture of safeguarding. Staff are well trained to notice and report signs of concern. Leaders respond swiftly to support pupils and families in need of

help. They also ensure that everyone in the community stays alert, and hold fast to the view that 'it could happen here'.

Leaders carry out the required checks on the suitability of staff to work with pupils. Leaders provide a curriculum that teaches pupils to understand age-appropriate risks, including about healthy relationships. Pupils know that adults will listen to them if they have any concerns.

Background

When we have judged a school to be outstanding, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains outstanding. 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 outstanding in January 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

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| Unique reference number | 115619 |
| Local authority | Gloucestershire |
| Inspection number | 10287459 |
| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Voluntary controlled |
| Age range of pupils | 3 to 11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 73 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair of governing body | Chris Davis |
| Headteacher | Jayne Neveu |
| Website | www.deerhurst.gloucs.sch.uk |
| Dates of previous inspection | 17 and 18 January 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 |

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Diocese of Gloucester. At the most recent section 48 inspection of the school, carried out in March 2023, the school was judged to be excellent.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- 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, other school staff and three members of the governing body.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, science and art. For each deep dive, the 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 in Years 1, 2 and 3 read to an adult. Story time was visited in Reception Year.
- Inspectors reviewed the school’s safeguarding documentation, including the safeguarding checks carried out on staff working at the school. They considered how well the designated safeguarding lead acts on concerns about pupils’ welfare and safety. Inspectors talked to pupils, staff and governors about how the school keeps everyone safe.
- The lead inspector held a telephone conversation with an education performance adviser from Gloucestershire local authority.
- The lead inspector considered key documentation, including school development plans and governors’ minutes.
- Inspectors observed pupils’ behaviour in lessons and around the school site. An inspector met with the headteacher to discuss and scrutinise how they respond to behaviour incidents and pupils’ attendance.
- Inspectors considered the responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, including free-text replies, and responses to the staff surveys. Inspectors spoke with parents at the beginning of the school day and considered written correspondence received from them.

Inspection team

Jen Southall, lead inspector

His Majesty’s Inspector

Gary Schlick

Ofsted Inspector

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