

Inspection of a good school: St Richard's C of E First School

Four Pools Lane, Evesham, Worcestershire WR11 1DU

Inspection dates: 12 and 13 July 2023

Outcome

St Richard's C of E First School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy their learning at St Richard's C of E First School, especially when different subjects link together. Pupils can have a say in what they learn. Leaders are keen for pupils to understand the world outside the town. Visitors and trips out of school help pupils to put their learning in context.

Leaders have high expectations for pupils. Pupils move around the school in an orderly fashion and play happily at social times. They show respect towards one another and adults. Pupils behave well in lessons. Disruption to learning is rare. Pupils collaborate well when staff ask them to do so. They know that there are always adults to talk to and that staff deal with any bullying straight away.

Pupils study a wide range of subjects and learn well. Teachers skilfully adapt work for pupils, including for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils quickly learn to read widely and fluently. Staff prepare them well for the next stage in their education.

Pupils take part in a wide variety of after-school clubs, such as in sports, art and gardening. They have the opportunity to stand for election to the school council and represent the views of their peers.

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

Leaders ensure that learning to read is the top priority. Pupils follow a structured phonics programme from the early years onwards. Pupils learn phonics in a logical order. Teachers regularly check how well pupils are learning. Staff are highly skilled and provide effective support for any pupils at risk of falling behind. Books for younger pupils are well matched to their phonic knowledge. Across the school, pupils read widely, including non-fiction texts and a range of poetry. They quickly become confident and enthusiastic readers.

Pupils study the full range of subjects in the national curriculum. Leaders have set out clearly how learning in each subject should build on what pupils already know. Teachers in the early years design activities that prepare children well for their next stage. As a result, the learning moves easily from one key stage to the next. In general, teachers plan the day-to-day learning for pupils so that they meet the longer-term learning aims. Staff understand the particular needs of pupils with SEND and enable them to learn the same topics as their peers. As a result, pupils, including pupils with SEND, learn well. However, in a few subjects, leaders have not specified precisely enough the key knowledge that all pupils need. On occasion, teachers do not use classroom activities that ensure that all pupils learn what they should.

Teachers have secure subject knowledge. They make sure that pupils understand and use the correct vocabulary. Teachers check on what pupils know and remember. They take effective steps to fill any gaps in pupils' learning. For example, they do this through 'start of the day' activities.

In mathematics, teachers make sure that pupils have a secure knowledge of basic number facts before moving on to more difficult work. Pupils make effective use of practical equipment. They learn how to apply their knowledge, both in mathematics and in other subjects such as geography.

Leaders ensure that pupils learn about other cultures, such as through the choice of fiction texts. Leaders have set up a link with a school in Malawi. This supports pupils to respect each other and those from cultures different from their own.

From the early years onwards, staff set clear expectations for how pupils should behave. Pupils consider the school's rules and rewards to be fair. Where necessary, staff support pupils who need help with their behaviour effectively. Pupils show interest in their work, such as in Viking culture and the motives for invading Britain. As a result, pupils are well motivated, and they show independence and responsibility. When invited to do so, pupils work effectively together and discuss teachers' questions eagerly.

Leaders check regularly on how well pupils are learning. Staff feel that leaders value their work. Staff are happy, motivated and believe that senior leaders are considerate of their workload. Staff appreciate the training that leaders provide, such as in the teaching of phonics. Some governors have recently joined the governing body with a number of vacancies to fill. Nevertheless, governors provide effective challenge and support for leaders and staff.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders make sure that staff are well trained in the school's safeguarding procedures. They provide regular updates to ensure that staff understand their roles and responsibilities. Staff are vigilant and know how to identify where pupils face particular risks. When staff raise a safeguarding concern, leaders take swift, effective steps to

involve other agencies. This means that children and families receive the help that they need.

Pupils learn about how to keep themselves safe, including from any risks they could meet online.

Leaders make the right checks on those who join the school. They keep and maintain accurate records. Governors support safeguarding arrangements effectively.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a few subjects, leaders have not identified the key knowledge and the most effective activities to enable pupils to learn and remember this key knowledge. As a result, pupils do not learn and remember everything that they should. All subject leaders should make sure that they set out clearly what pupils should learn, and provide guidance for teachers on those activities that best help pupils to do so.

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 February 2013.

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	116810
Local authority	Worcestershire
Inspection number	10256984
Type of school	First
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4 to 10
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	319
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Katya Chaplin
Headteacher	Mark Ridlinton
Website	www.st-richards.worcs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	2 November 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- St Richard's C of E First School is a Church of England faith school in the Diocese of Worcester. The religious character of the school was last inspected in January 2023. The next section 48 inspection of the school's religious character will take place before January 2031.
- The school provides part-time alternative provision for one pupil at an unregistered provider.

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 his evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with the headteacher and other senior leaders. Meetings were also held with the special educational needs and disabilities coordinators and curriculum leaders.

- The vice-chair of governors and two other governors met with the inspector. The inspector spoke by telephone to representatives of the local authority and of the diocese.
- The inspector spoke with pupils at social times, and with groups of pupils more formally.
- When inspecting safeguarding, the inspector looked at the school's procedures for recruiting and checking on staff suitability to work with children. He also considered the effectiveness of staff training and the procedures to keep pupils safe.
- The inspector reviewed a range of documents, including evaluations and improvement plans. He also reviewed the school's attendance and behaviour records.
- The inspector took account of responses to Ofsted Parent View. The inspector met with parents at the start of the second day of the inspection. He also considered responses to Ofsted's survey for staff.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, the inspector discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to staff, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of their work. He also scrutinised their work in some other subjects.
- The inspector listened to a sample of pupils from Years 1, 2 and 3 reading to a familiar adult.

Inspection team

Martin Spoor, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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