

# Inspection of Walton Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Meadow Lane, Walton, Street, Somerset BA16 9LA

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Inspection dates: 18 and 19 October 2023

**Overall effectiveness** **Good**

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The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Early years provision **Good**

Previous inspection grade Outstanding

This school was last inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 12 years ago and judged 'Outstanding' under a previous inspection framework. This reflected the school's overall effectiveness under the inspection framework in use at the time. From then until November 2020, the school was exempted by law from routine inspection, so there has been a longer gap than usual between graded inspections under section 5 of the Act. Judgements in this report are based on the current inspection framework and also reflect changes that may have happened at any point since the last graded inspection.

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils are proud of their school. They show care and consideration for one another. For example, older pupils act as 'buddies' for younger pupils. They have their lunch with children in the Reception class. When pupils fall out, they are confident staff help them to resolve issues.

The school focuses on pupils' well-being. A school fair for pupils, parents and the community highlighted well-being as a central part of the school culture. Pupils learn how to talk about feelings. They learn to look after one another. Pupils train as well-being ambassadors. Pupils take on different leadership roles, such as house captain or belonging to the arts council. Pupils train for these roles and have a clear purpose about how they contribute to school life.

The school plans a variety of trips, school events and clubs. These include chess, cookery and sports. Boys and girls play football fixtures against other schools. Many pupils take part in these clubs. Pupils are enthusiastic about events such as arts week. They learn about the fashion industry and significant designers.

Pupils learn to keep safe, both online and in the community. They understand how to manage online games responsibly. Older pupils complete safety courses, such as 'bikeability.'

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

The school has planned a broad and ambitious curriculum. They adapt the curriculum appropriately for the mixed-age classes. In most subjects, the curriculum is well sequenced. In mathematics, pupils develop their number skill in a logical order. In a few parts of the curriculum, the school has not sequenced some strands of the learning. For example, in writing, the order pupils learn and build on grammatical knowledge is not carefully planned out. The school has not explicitly considered what vocabulary pupils will need to know and when. This means pupils do not always have the subject vocabulary for their learning. In Reception, children begin to learn numeracy and literacy as soon as they start. The school plans activities and play to support children's interests. Learning about farming and harvest, children enjoyed making a bread sheaf of wheat.

Teachers carefully check pupils' understanding. They make sure any misconceptions are quickly dealt with. In a majority of subjects, pupils know what they need to do next to get better. In Reception class, teachers assess how well children are developing. However, some parts of the early years curriculum are new and still being embedded. This means some adaptation of the curriculum is less precise. The school is prioritising this work.

The school ensures that teachers have bespoke training to support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). This means teachers skilfully adapt the curriculum to support these pupils. Teachers are prompt to identify when

a pupil may have a need. This begins in early years, where teachers start to identify the potential needs children may have.

The programme to teach pupils to read is well established. Teachers are well trained to make sure pupils have the exact support they need to keep up with their peers. Pupils read books matched to the sounds they know. As pupils become confident in reading, they follow a well-planned reading curriculum. In Reception, teachers make sure children can say letter sounds clearly. They help children to develop their speech and pronunciation well.

Pupils are calm and orderly, both in the classroom and out. They listen and focus on their learning. If a pupil becomes distracted, they respond quickly to the expectations of their teachers. Pupils are positive about their learning. The school celebrates pupils' successes through assemblies. The school monitors attendance and punctuality carefully. It aims to remove barriers when there are attendance concerns. As a result, most pupils attend well.

The school ensures there is a well-planned personal, social and health education curriculum. This begins in the early years. Pupils discuss and explore a range of issues. Pupils learn about health, families and respecting difference in age-appropriate lessons. Through house elections, pupils understand about democracy. Pupils learn about different religions and cultures. They are well prepared for life in modern Britain.

The governing body is supportive of school leaders and staff. Leaders, including governors, are clear about school priorities and next steps. Staff enjoy working at the school. Well-chosen professional development makes sure staff have the expertise and support they need. Parents are enthusiastic about the school. The school culture is safe and nurturing. This encourages pupils to develop their confidence, for example learning new musical instruments or singing for parents and the community.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

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

- For some strands of the curriculum, leaders have not clarified the precise content pupils will learn and when. This means pupils do not build on what they already know in a coherent way or they re-visit content they know well. The school needs to ensure it plans and sequences the essential knowledge pupils will learn and when that will happen.
- Some parts of the early years curriculum are in the initial stages of being implemented. This means it is not adapted to meet the needs of the children

exactly and concisely. The school should make sure the early years curriculum is implemented well.

## **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' is used to mean pupils with SEND; pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	123776
<b>Local authority</b>	Somerset
<b>Inspection number</b>	10288158
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	143
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Dave Kennedy
<b>Headteacher</b>	Rachel Toal
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.waltonprimary.co.uk">www.waltonprimary.co.uk</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	5 and 6 July 2011, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- Walton Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School is a church school in the Diocese of Bath and Wells. The school was judged to be outstanding at its section 48 inspection in September 2016.
- Classes are taught in mixed-age groups.
- The school has an after-school club.
- The school does not use any registered alternative provision.

## Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, school leaders, the special educational needs coordinator and teachers.
- The lead inspector met with representatives from the governing body.
- The lead inspector spoke with a representative for the local authority and a representative from the diocese.
- The lead inspector listened to pupils in Years 1, 2 and 3 read to an adult.
- Inspectors met and spoke with pupils about their experience of school.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, English, mathematics and art. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors considered responses to the online survey for parents, Ofsted Parent View, and the view of staff in Ofsted's online surveys.

### **Inspection team**

Rachel Hesketh, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

James Oldham

His Majesty's Inspector

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