

# Inspection of Thatcham Park CofE Primary

Park Avenue, Thatcham, Berkshire RG18 4NP

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Inspection dates: 8 and 9 May 2024

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
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The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
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Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Good</b>
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Personal development	<b>Good</b>
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Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
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Early years provision	<b>Good</b>
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Previous inspection grade	Good
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## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils are proud advocates for their inclusive school. They are eager to attend and participate in all that is on offer to them. Children in 'Stepping Stones' Nursery get off to an excellent start to their education. Adults nurture their creativity and curiosity by planning engaging experiences and activities.

Pupils live up to the school's high expectations for behaviour and attitudes. They display kindness and respect towards the staff and their peers. Relationships between teachers and pupils are supportive and trusting. As one pupil said, 'We welcome and care for everyone here at our amazing school.' Children learn how to manage their emotions in positive and independent ways. In the early years, they enjoy making friendships quickly and playing together. Children learn to develop their confidence and resilience.

Pupils are delighted to take part in the range of opportunities the school offers. Older pupils volunteer for 'vintage adventure', supporting a dementia friendly and 'young at heart' club at the local church. In addition, pupils learn the importance of looking after others by collecting donations for the local food bank and supporting charities.

The wide range of clubs on offer are valued by pupils because they help to develop their talents and confidence. Pupils enjoy taking on different roles and responsibilities such as eco-warriors, reading ambassadors and librarians to provide further support to the school.

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

The school has planned an ambitious curriculum that is interesting and engaging. Staff make the curriculum memorable for pupils through trips, visits and experiences. These experiences are planned to strengthen pupils' wider learning and understanding of the different subjects they explore.

Staff work hard to ensure that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities learn well across the curriculum. Any additional support is carefully structured to help all pupils succeed. The school engages effectively with a range of external specialists to help provide bespoke support when needed. Staff in the 'Bridge' class expertly help pupils who have more complex needs to engage and enjoy their learning.

In many subjects, what pupils will learn has been precisely identified to ensure teachers know what they should teach and when. However, this is not the case in subjects where the curriculum has more recently been improved. In these subjects, pupils are unable to recall their learning as confidently. They are able to remember some factual knowledge but this varies in consistency across some subjects. In addition, teachers are not always identifying gaps in pupils learning quickly and

addressing these. This means that pupils are not yet fully developing a deep understanding across all subjects as the school intends.

Children get off to an excellent start in early years. There is a clear focus on developing children's communication and language skills. In Nursery, children begin to identify sounds. This sets them up well for the Reception Year, where they start to learn phonics straight away. Pupils learn the knowledge they need to be able to blend sounds to read simple words. Teachers receive regular training and support to teach reading well. They use their expertise to adjust lessons so that pupils can practise their skills at the appropriate level. As a result, pupils build their reading knowledge and develop a passion for books. This enthusiasm continues as they move through the school.

Pupils love talking about their learning and are engaged in lessons. Positive behaviours exist across the school and pupils are ready to learn and will try their best. Children in early years are supported to maintain concentration and engagement. They work well independently or in small groups. Pupils are respectful and polite when staff remind them of the high expectations for their conduct. There is a clear moral ethos of nurturing every pupil to help them achieve. This culture permeates across the school, resulting in a cohesive community where pupils flourish.

Pupils' attendance at school continues to remain high. The school offers support to families in removing barriers that might be stopping pupils from coming to school. Robust and effective systems are in place to ensure that pupils continue to attend regularly and on time.

The school places significant importance on pupils' wider development. Opportunities to perform, work together and compete in sports increase pupils' independence and resilience. They understand the importance of exercise and how it benefits their physical and mental health. They learn how to stay safe. Pupils develop a strong sense of identity. Staff offer exceptional pastoral support to pupils that is highly personalised. This results in pupils developing trusting relationships with their peers and teachers.

All school leaders want the best outcomes for pupils. They are working to improve the curriculum even further. Staff feel valued and recognise the efforts to support their well-being and workload.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

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

- In some subjects, the school has not carefully identified the important knowledge

and vocabulary that pupils need to learn. This makes it difficult for teachers to identify and address any gaps in learning as swiftly as they could. Pupils can also find it hard to recall what they have learned and make links to new learning. The school should continue its ongoing work to improve these aspects of the curriculum.

- In some areas of the curriculum, staff are still developing ways of checking pupils' understanding and knowledge. This means that teaching activities do not always ensure pupils learn as much as they could. The school should continue to provide staff with the training and support they need to help pupils learn the school's ambitious curriculum successfully.

## 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 special educational needs and/or disabilities (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>	135080
<b>Local authority</b>	West Berkshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10321927
<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>	411
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Sian Smithers and Mark Bennet (Co-Chairs)
<b>Headteacher</b>	Alison Webster
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.thatchampark.w-berks.sch.uk">www.thatchampark.w-berks.sch.uk</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	27 and 28 November 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- Thatcham Park CofE Primary School is located in the Diocese of Oxford. Its last section 48 inspection took place in April 2022.
- The school's Nursery has provision for two-, three- and four-year-old children.
- There is a breakfast club for pupils that the school runs.
- The school currently uses one 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.

- During this inspection the inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, the senior leadership team, teachers, support staff and pupils.
- The lead inspector met with the co-chairs of the local governing body and with members of the board.
- The lead inspector held separate conversations with representatives from the local authority (in person) and diocese (by phone).
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, history, art and design and physical education. In each subject, the inspectors met with subject leaders, talked to pupils, visited lessons, spoke to teachers and looked at samples of pupils' work. The lead inspector listened to some pupils read to adults. Other aspects of the school's curriculum were also considered.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the 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.
- The inspectors took account of a range of other information, including the school's development plans, school policies and governor minutes.
- The inspectors considered the responses to the Ofsted Parent View survey and the free-text comments that were submitted. They also took account of the responses to the confidential staff survey and gathered the views of both staff and pupils throughout the inspection.

### **Inspection team**

Numera Anwar, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
David Harris	Ofsted Inspector
Mineza Maher	Ofsted Inspector

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