

Inspection of a good school: Radley Church of England Primary School

Church Road, Radley, Abingdon, Oxfordshire OX14 3QF

Inspection dates:

4 June 2024

Outcome

Radley Church of England Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils really enjoy coming to school here. They value the school's kind and caring ethos, and they know that staff are always there to help them if they need it. At social times and in lessons, pupils know what the school expects of them, and they are eager to fulfil this. The school takes effective action to resolve any behaviour issues that do arise.

The school is ambitious for every pupil to succeed. Children in early years make a strong start to their education, thanks to focused and purposeful learning activities. Older pupils in the mixed-age classes benefit from tailored input from their teachers. As a result, pupils achieve well across the school. They enjoy demonstrating what they have learnt, such as through topic-based performances at the end of each term.

Pupils love to engage with nature through the school's outdoor learning programme. The school's partnership with a nearby independent school offers pupils the chance to extend their musical and sporting experiences. Pupils take part in exciting visits, including residential trips. These help them to build their confidence and resilience. The school makes sure that disadvantaged pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), benefit fully from these experiences.

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

An effective reading programme is at the heart of the school's curriculum. The school invests significant time and resources into this, so that pupils concentrate on the letters and sounds they need to master next. Staff check on what pupils are able to read confidently. This helps them to identify those who are at risk of falling behind. These pupils benefit from additional support, both from their teachers and from volunteer readers. This helps them to catch up swiftly. Some of the books provided for pupils are not precisely matched to the sounds that they can read confidently. When this happens, some pupils at the early stages of reading do not develop their fluency and comprehension as strongly as they could.

The school has made thoughtful changes to its curriculum, to ensure that all pupils access a broad and ambitious programme. Learning is sequenced well, so that at every age, pupils build their knowledge in clear steps. Staff identify the needs of pupils with SEND quickly, and this helps to make sure that learning is adapted for them effectively. In early years, staff help children to develop new vocabulary as they learn and play. Teachers typically model and demonstrate new learning well for pupils. Sometimes, the tasks that teachers select are not directly connected with the learning that is set out in the curriculum. When this happens, pupils do not build as much of the intended knowledge or skills as they could do.

Overall, pupils learn effectively. They are confident in recalling many aspects of the curriculum. In mathematics, they can apply what they have learned to solve problems. Pupils with SEND achieve strongly from their starting points. Staff use assessment information to make sure they revisit topics that need more consolidation. Leaders have responded directly to variations in last year's published outcomes data by reviewing the planning and delivery of the curriculum.

Attendance is strong, and this helps to make sure that pupils keep up in their learning. The school emphasises the importance of attending regularly. Staff understand the challenges that some pupils face in attending well, and work closely with families to reduce absence. Previously, a small number of pupils found it difficult to adhere to the school's behaviour expectations. Leaders have introduced a new behaviour policy to address this. Some aspects of this are more firmly established than others. Overall, behaviour in classrooms is purposeful and enables pupils to learn well.

The school gives all pupils the chance to develop and demonstrate the 'Radley Rs'. These characteristics, such as resilience and respect, reflect the school's values. For example, pupils can take part in the 'eco team', or be a worship leader. Children in early years are given a firm grounding in social skills. Staff guide them to share and take turns as they play and learn. Pupils learn about different cultures and backgrounds, such as through assemblies and the range of books on offer.

Staff feel that leaders are considerate of their wellbeing in decisions they make. As new policies and structures take root, leaders and governors are alert to making sure that change is manageable for staff. Leaders recognise that in a few areas, there is more to be done to ensure that their aspirations for pupils are achieved consistently.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some of the activities that pupils complete are not directly aligned with the intentions of the curriculum. Where this is the case, pupils do not get the most out of completing these tasks, and as a result do not gain as much knowledge as they could. Leaders need to ensure that the work set matches what and how the curriculum intends pupils to learn most effectively.
- In order to address the school's priorities, leaders have made substantial changes in a number of areas. Some of these systems and processes are more firmly established than others. As a result, there are variations in how leaders' aims have been realised in practice. Leaders need to ensure that they embed systems and policies thoroughly and consistently throughout the school.

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 March 2015.

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

Unique reference number	123157
Local authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	10321867
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	158
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Gareth Mulcahy
Headteacher	Claire Thomas
Website	www.radleyprimary.uk
Date of previous inspection	26 February 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Radley Church of England Primary School is a Church of England voluntary controlled school. The most recent section 48 SIAMS inspection took place in November 2019. The next section 48 SIAMS inspection is due to take place before November 2025.
- The school is currently in a period of expansion as the published admissions number increases to 30 pupils per year.
- The school does not currently use any alternative providers.

Information about this inspection

- 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. The inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspectors met with school leaders including the headteacher and deputy headteacher. The inspectors also met representatives from the governing board.

- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: history, early reading and mathematics. For each deep dive, the 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. The inspectors also discussed the curriculum and provision for pupils with SEND.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, governors, staff, parents and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts the pupils' interests first.

Inspection team

Daniel Botting, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Christine Bulmer

Ofsted Inspector

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