

# Inspection of a good school: St Ebbe's Church of England Aided Primary School

Whitehouse Road, Oxford, Oxfordshire OX1 4NA

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Inspection dates: 11 and 12 June 2024

## Outcome

St Ebbe's Church of England Aided Primary School continues to be a good school.

## What is it like to attend this school?

This is a happy school where pupils are not afraid to share their views because they know they have a voice. Pupils from different cultures and faiths thrive here. They are treated as individuals, but know they are part of something bigger. Pupils are openly welcoming to visitors and proud to celebrate and share their passions and interests when given the chance (which is quite often if you are a pupil here).

The school sits as one special community at the heart of many. Aspirations for what pupils can achieve in and out of classrooms are high. Pupils from all backgrounds, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), do well both academically and socially. Parents agree. They also agree that their children feel safe here because of the care of hard-working staff.

Pupils behave well. They like that the school is a friendly place. Older pupils talk positively about the way they are openly encouraged to play an active part in school life. Break and lunchtimes are a notable delight at St Ebbe's. Boredom has been confined to the past as imaginations are stretched by a multitude of opportunities, enabling 'children to be children' in a safe, exciting and inclusive way.

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

Though the school remains good overall, significant improvements have been made since the last inspection. Leaders at all levels know the school well. They are reflective and refreshingly honest about what is great about the school and what still needs to be better. Because of this, staff feel well led, supported and valued, which is reflected in their classroom practice.

The curriculum is largely unique in its design and is tailored to meet the needs of pupils well. As a result, pupils enjoy their work as geographers, artists, or musicians, no matter what their barriers to learning are. Pupils with SEND are supported sensitively because

their needs are understood and staff are skilled at adapting their teaching, though not lowering their expectations for pupils with additional needs.

Pupils enjoy learning across the curriculum. Subjects other than mathematics and English are equally popular and designed to foster pupils' interests, while challenging them to learn about new things. The history scheme of work is clearly sequenced from early years to Year 6. Pupils enjoy being challenged by key questions such as 'do humans need art and why?' in their study of history. They also enjoy learning about local history and much use is made of local historical resources and collections to bring history to life.

The school's work to teach pupils to read is given appropriate importance. Classroom visits in early years and key stage 1 showed the school's chosen phonics programme being implemented well. Pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds and those in danger of falling behind are closely monitored and supported when needed. Work to develop pupils' love of reading is also a priority, though the school knows that there is further work to do to ensure that all pupils benefit equally from the well-intended, but currently inconsistently implemented, plans in this respect.

The impact of the school's mathematics programme is clear to see in published national test and assessment data. Pupils make excellent progress and attain very well in comparison to other schools. Despite this, the school constantly looks to improve how the teaching of mathematics supports all pupils to make the progress they are capable of.

Pupils' personal development is supported well because the curriculum beyond the academic has a high priority. This does not happen by accident. Staff understand the importance of preparing pupils for life in modern Britain and beyond the school gates. Pupils become increasingly aware of equality and difference as they move through the school. This starts in the very well-resourced early years, where children quickly learn about what is expected and what is not, because staff have equally high aspirations across all phases of the school.

The school's junior leadership team plays an important role in bringing pupils together. Team members relish their duties to promote the wider interests of pupils, leading assemblies, and acting as ambassadors and positive role models for all. Simple things such as ensuring that pupils are safe and confident to cycle to school are also prioritised. This work is linked to the context of living in the City of Oxford, but also as part of promoting healthy lifestyles and encouraging independence. Residential trips and sports days are keenly anticipated. Pupils' growing enjoyment of school is also reflected in a significant improvement in their attendance and an impressive reduction in persistent absence.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

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

- The school's work to develop pupils' love of reading is not as consistent as leaders intend. In some year groups, pupils do not read as widely or as often as they might. This means that whilst some pupils experience a rich and varied menu of high-quality books and texts, some are less well served. Leaders are aware of this. Work has begun to address the issue. Leaders now need to make their expectations more overtly clear, so that all pupils have the same opportunities and their love of reading and the written word is developed fully by the time they leave 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 April 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	123212
<b>Local authority</b>	Oxfordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10321873
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	290
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Steve Whitla
<b>Headteacher</b>	Tina Farr
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.st-ebbes.oxon.sch.uk/">www.st-ebbes.oxon.sch.uk/</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	7 November 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- This is a voluntary aided Church of England primary school in the Diocese of Oxford. The school also works closely with Oxfordshire local authority.
- As a school with a religious ethos, the school was last inspected under Section 48 in February 2018.
- The school does not currently use alternative provision.

## 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 inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in his evaluation of the school.
- The inspector held a wide range of meetings with leaders at all levels, as well as teaching and support staff. He met with the chair and vice chair of the governing body accompanied by two other governors. He also had a telephone conversation with a

representative of the local authority and met briefly with a representative of the diocese.

- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, the inspector 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. He heard some pupils read to a known adult. He also discussed the curriculum in some other subjects with leaders.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of parents, 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 inspector gathered evidence to explore the impact of pupils' behaviour, the school's wider curriculum offer and how leaders support staff with their workload.
- Pupils were talked to throughout the inspection to gain their views about the school. The inspector also met formally with a representative group of pupils.
- The inspector considered the views of parents submitted through Ofsted Parent View. The views of staff were also considered through Ofsted's staff survey.

### **Inspection team**

Clive Close, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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