

Inspection of a good school: Ripley St John's Church of England Primary School and Nursery

Dannah Street, Ripley, Derbyshire DE5 3BD

Inspection dates: 12 and 13 June 2024

Outcome

Ripley St John's Church of England Primary School and Nursery continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils know they are well cared for in this happy, inclusive and welcoming school. The large majority of parents and carers are highly supportive of the school. One captured the sentiments of many when they said: 'This is not just a school but more importantly a community, which works together to help children to feel safe, be happy and secure success for their futures.' Pupils feel happy and safe. They enjoy coming to school. Relationships are warm and supportive. Pupils get on well together. They are polite and courteous.

The school promotes pupils' spiritual, social, moral and cultural development exceptionally well. The school organises many trips and visits including undertaking geography fieldwork in Dovedale, listening to and playing with the Halle Orchestra in Derby and seeing Parliament. Pupils learn about different faiths and cultures. Pupils are well supported in exploring their own identity and place in modern Britain. They are highly respectful of people from backgrounds different to their own.

Pupils attend, behave and achieve well. They have every confidence that any concerns they have will be dealt with by staff. Pupils appreciate the school's 'worry wizard'. Most pupils live up to the high expectations the school has of them. Classrooms are busy and purposeful.

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

Strong and reflective leadership, including subject leadership, lies at the heart of the school's ambitious and inclusive curriculum for all pupils. Leaders, including governors, have a precise understanding of the school's strengths and improvement priorities.

Governors are effective in holding school leaders to account. Staff morale is positive and united. Teachers and other supporting adults feel empowered to contribute to the life of the school, for example by developing artistry, nurture in nature and librarianship. Everyone is committed to pupils' successful achievement.

The school has ensured that pupils' learning builds from the early years to the end of Year 6. Staff have clarity about what is taught and when.

Children make a very positive start in the early years, meaning they are well prepared for Year 1. Learning spaces in Nursery and Reception are stimulating and well organised. Activity stations are well considered. Children enjoy high-quality interactions with adults that support their discovery of new learning. Routines are well established. Children learn social skills quickly, such as taking turns and sharing resources.

The culture of reading in the school is exceptionally strong. Pupils like to read. The school's library is an inviting space, promoting books from a wide range of genres. Pupils enjoy reading in the library's 'hobbit holes'. Equally, they enjoy the interactive style of storytelling by their teachers, anticipating what might be coming next. The school has thoughtfully ensured that the books pupils read reflect life in modern society, including different cultures and future aspirations. As a result, pupils are well prepared to become responsible citizens. They are encouraged to use their voice respectfully. The school facilitates wider opportunities to encourage reading at home, including 'book blanket' reading with families.

Children learn to read as soon as they join Reception. Staff are well trained in the delivery of the school's phonics scheme. Staff make frequent checks to ensure that pupils are on track to achieve the expected standard by the end of Year 1. Pupils who need extra help and support receive this swiftly.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are well supported. They receive tailored support from teachers and supporting adults. The school has strengthened its systems for sharing the information staff need to help pupils with SEND. Pupils with SEND are fully included in the life of the school.

Teachers have strong subject knowledge. They use this to plan engaging lesson activities that stimulate pupils' interest. Pupils particularly enjoy mathematics and are keen to demonstrate their learning. Teachers typically question pupils well to check their understanding. Sometimes, teachers move on to new ideas too quickly before some pupils have fully grasped what has been taught. Pupils typically present their work well. However, on occasions, pupils make repeated errors in their spelling of important words. These are sometimes left unchallenged by staff. Nevertheless, by the end of each key stage, most pupils achieve well in most subjects.

The school takes pupils' personal development seriously. The school's curriculum for personal, social, health and economic development (PSHE) is well considered. An extensive range of extra-curricular activities complement the opportunities pupils have to explore the world around them, particularly through the arts and sports, as well as other

bespoke opportunities such as archaeology. Pupils like to take on leadership roles, including well-being warriors, arts ambassadors and members of the eco-council.

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, teachers move pupils on to new learning before ensuring that all pupils have understood what has been taught. When this happens, a small number of pupils lose focus and their concentration drifts. Gaps in knowledge develop as a result. The school should ensure that all staff know how best to check pupils' understanding before moving learning on so that all pupils are able to achieve as well as they can.
- Staff expectations of pupils' accuracy in spelling are not consistently high in all year groups. Sometimes errors in spelling, including specialist subject vocabulary, are not identified and remedied swiftly enough. Some pupils continue to make the same spelling errors over time. The school should ensure that all staff have the skills they need to promote and secure consistent expectations of spelling so that pupils can achieve more.

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 November 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	112849
Local authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	10339656
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	362
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Audrey Michael
Headteacher	Chris Howarth
Website	www.st-johns.derbyshire.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	22 January 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The headteacher commenced in this role in May 2024, having previously been the deputy headteacher at the school.
- The school is part of the Diocese of Derby. The most recent section 48 inspection of this Church of England school, which is an inspection of the school's religious character, took place in June 2024.
- The school does not use any alternative education 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 their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with the headteacher and other members of staff in the school, including the school's leader for phonics and the early years, and the school's coordinator for pupils with SEND.

- The inspector met with four members of the school's governing body, including the chair and vice-chair. He also spoke by telephone with a representative from the local authority.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in early reading, geography and mathematics. For each deep dive, the inspector held discussions about the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspector also considered curriculum documentation for two other subjects, PSHE and music. He also reviewed a wide range of documentation. including school policies and records for pupils with SEND.
- The inspector listened to pupils from key stage 1 and Year 3 read to a familiar adult.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school site during playtime. He spoke with several groups of pupils both formally and informally.
- The inspector considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View and Ofsted's surveys for staff and pupils.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of arrangements for safeguarding, the inspector 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.

Inspection team

Chris Stevens, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2024