

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

Mere Road, Finmere, Buckingham, Buckinghamshire MK18 4AR

Inspection date: 25 June 2024

Outcome

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

The headteacher of this school is Clare Law. This school is part of The Warriner Multi Academy Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Annabel Kay, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Duncan Raper.

What is it like to attend this school?

Finmere uses its small size as a strength. Leaders have built a culture based on the values of 'be kind, be honest and persevere'. These values are highly visible and known by all. Respect shapes all interactions. It comes from everyone knowing each other well. Parents recognise this and say the 'family feel' helps their children thrive. The pupils are proud to receive awards when they demonstrate the school values.

The school is ambitious for all pupils, including those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils enjoy their lessons. They rise to the school's high expectations for their learning. Most pupils achieve well across a range of subjects. Pupils benefit from increased opportunities outside of the classroom. They enjoy trips to the trust farm and to London.

Pupils show positive attitudes to school, each other and adults. They behave well. The routines in place in the classroom, corridors and social spaces mean the environment is safe, calm and orderly. Staff understand their role in promoting a safe and effective learning environment. Bullying and discriminatory behaviour are rare because the school community will not tolerate it. Pupils do not hesitate to report any unkind behaviour and trust staff to provide support to help everyone learn well.

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

In collaboration with the trust, the school has developed an ambitious curriculum that builds in complexity across the key stages. The key knowledge and vocabulary leaders want pupils to learn is clearly identified, right from the beginning of early years, when the youngest children get off to a strong start. Big questions help pupils to make connections

and develop their thinking. They talk enthusiastically about 'thinking like' a historian or a mathematician.

Teachers have good subject knowledge. They skilfully use different teaching techniques to help pupils learn. Most pupils complete tasks on their own effectively. In mathematics, pupils benefit from clear routines as they solve interesting mathematical problems. In early years, resources are used to reinforce key ideas and support learning. Pupils enjoy lessons and want to do well. They are eager to share their ideas with each other and adults. When needed, classroom resources are carefully chosen and adjusted by teachers to meet the identified needs of pupils with SEND. As a result, pupils with SEND achieve well alongside their peers.

During lessons, teachers are clear about what they want pupils to learn. Their instructions and choice of classroom activities support this. However, not all pupils can recall what they have previously learned. This is because the checking of what pupils know and can remember is sometimes not precise enough. The school recognises this and is putting in further support and training to ensure teachers check what pupils know and can do before they move on to new learning.

The school has a sharp focus on reading. Younger children start learning sounds as soon as they join the school. They experience sounds in the environment and through their choosing time activities. Leaders continue to ensure staff have the training they need to consistently teach and embed the reading scheme in use across the school. Adults track each pupil's progress carefully. As a result, they quickly support pupils who fall behind. Pupils read every day and read with increasing fluency. They can talk about the stories they read, can explain what happens and give reasons why they like them.

The school has high expectations for pupils' attendance and conduct. These are regularly communicated to the school community. Leaders track pupils' attendance carefully and as a result pupils' attendance is strong. Everyone is clear about how they are expected to behave. Pupils can resolve conflict through talking, without resorting to unkindness. All pupils mix well together and support each other. During playtime, the pupils play together on the adventure playground and the football pitch. Older pupils learn about responsibility as they help younger pupils with their snacks and playground equipment.

Pupils are given plentiful opportunities to learn and embrace the world around them. They understand the importance of having positive and healthy relationships. Opportunities such as Safer Internet Day help them learn to keep themselves safe and make decisions which show consideration for others. Older pupils are proud to be Space Maker leaders. They enjoy running a weekly session to support mental health. Collective worship is integral to the school's ethos. Pupils fully participate and engage in the key messages.

The trust carefully considers staff well-being and workload. It does this when making decisions about school improvement, such as changes to the curriculum. Trust leaders

provide effective challenge and support to help the school make further improvements to the education on offer.

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 are not consistently checking pupils' understanding. As a result, some pupils have gaps in their knowledge that are not being rectified before moving on to new learning. The school needs to ensure that teachers have the training and support they need to be more precise in identifying what pupils know and can do.

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 predecessor school, Finmere Church of England Primary School, to be good in October 2013.

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	147753
Local authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	10322049
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	35
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Duncan Raper
CEO of trust	Annabel Kay
Headteacher	Clare Law
Website	www.finmere.oxon.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school joined The Warriner Multi Academy Trust in 2020.
- The school is a Church of England school and is in the Diocese of Oxford. The school received its Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools in November 2016.
- The school provides and manages a breakfast and after-school club.
- This school does not use any 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. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- The lead inspector met with the headteacher and the trust CEO, the chair of trustees and the chair of the academy committee. She had a phone call with a representative of the diocese.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and history. 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, 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 reviewed the school's attendance and behaviour records, as well as a number of policies and its self-evaluation.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour around the school during lessons, in assembly and at lunchtime and playtime. Inspectors also spoke to staff and pupils to hear their views.
- The inspectors spoke with staff and pupils to gather their views. They considered parents' and carers' responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View. The inspectors also took account of responses to the staff and pupil surveys.

Inspection team

Charlotte Wilson, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Lucy Hillyard

Ofsted Inspector

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