Inspection of Ursula Taylor Church of England School

High Street, Clapham, Bedford, Bedfordshire MK41 6EG

Inspection dates:	29 and 30 April 2025
The quality of education	**Outstanding**
Behaviour and attitudes	**Outstanding**
Personal development	**Outstanding**
Leadership and management	**Outstanding**
Early years provision	**Outstanding**
Previous inspection grade	**Good**

The executive headteacher of this school is Victoria Morrall. This school is part of Diocese of St Albans 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), Anna Rogers, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Jenny Jenkins.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils flourish at this this school. They progress exceptionally well from their starting points. As a result, pupils achieve well.

Pupils fully understand the routines of the school day and the high expectations staff have of them. They display exemplary behaviour at all times. The school does not tolerate bullying. Pupils look after each other. Older pupils actively care for those who are younger. As a result, pupils feel secure, happy and safe.

In lessons, pupils listen very carefully to every instruction. They work very hard and try their best at all times. They learn exceptionally well because teachers are experts. They explain things clearly and ensure expectations are high.

Pupils who join during the year are immediately and warmly welcomed into the school. Everyone values the contributions these new pupils make to school life.

The school has thought very carefully about how to enrich the curriculum with exciting and meaningful experiences. This helps pupils remember what they have been taught. For example, in the Reception Year, pupils plant potatoes in the spring. In the autumn, the new starters dig them up and eat them. This helps pupils remember how plants grow and make food for us.

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

The school has developed an ambitious curriculum. It helps to ensure pupils excel across the full range of subjects. The school goes significantly beyond the typical. In music, pupils successfully learn to play five musical instruments. Pupils achieve exceptionally well because the school consistently sets and enables pupils to attain the highest expectations. Pupils' work is of a very high quality. Pupils take great pride in their handwriting and presentation. Teachers check pupils' understanding methodically. Pupils respond immediately to any feedback given. This helps them to deepen and remember their learning.

Learning to read and learning to love reading are central to the curriculum. The school ensures staff effectively teach its chosen phonics scheme. Children in the early years learn the sounds they need to know. The teaching of reading across the school is very effective. Staff use accurate checks to identify anyone falling behind. Pupils make exceptional progress during their time at school. They grow into very confident readers. They also develop a love of reading. Teachers read a wide range of books that the children enjoy. Older pupils have the chance to share their love of reading when they read to the younger year groups.

Children in the Reception Year benefit from the exceptionally well-thought-out learning environment. The highly skilled staff ensure the children use the indoor and outdoor learning spaces to successfully explore and extend their learning. Staff make the most of their interactions with the children. Routines and expectations for children's behaviour are

so well developed that time to learn is maximised. The children learn how to manage their emotions independently and build positive relationships with each other.

Pupils love to come to school and attend well. Swift and personalised actions are taken, when required. The school works with parents to overcome specific barriers to attendance. As a result, pupils attend very regularly and persistent absence is rare.

There are unwaveringly high expectations for the learning of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The school builds their confidence and independence effectively. Teachers make appropriate adaptations to their lessons to meet pupils' individual needs. Consequently, pupils with SEND access the same curriculum as their peers. This contributes to pupils with SEND achieving exceptionally well from their various starting points.

Pupils listen attentively to their teachers and follow instructions without hesitation. There is a calm and purposeful atmosphere in lessons. Pupils are focused, engaged and do not need to be reminded of what they should be doing. They are motivated and independent learners. They manage their own friendships without needing adult support.

The school provides exceptionally well for pupils' personal development. Leaders have thought deeply about how they enhance the curriculum with trips, experiences and visitors. They support every child to see themselves as a sportsperson, a writer, a performer, and a musician. They achieve this ambition by providing opportunities for pupils to flourish and excel. For example, pupil's artwork is exhibited in local art galleries and supermarkets.

Trustees and governors support and challenge the school effectively. They know the school well. Their unwavering focus on taking decisions in the best interests of all pupils guides their actions. Staff are appreciative of the way leaders take careful account of their workload.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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	139990
Local authority	Bedford
Inspection number	10378534
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	372
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Jenny Jenkins
CEO of the trust	Anna Rogers
Headteacher	Victoria Morrall
Website	www.ursulataylorschool.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	29 and 30 October 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school does not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth form provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024 will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation 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 leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- The inspectors met with leaders, including the executive headteacher, head of school, senior teacher, and members of the board of trustees and governing body.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, science, geography and physical education. For each deep dive, the inspector met with subject leaders, scrutinised curriculum documentation, visited lessons, spoke to teachers, talked to pupils about their learning and looked at pupils' work. The lead inspector also listened to a sample of pupils read to a familiar adult.
- 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.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of school documentation. They held discussions with pupils, including in lessons and during breaktimes.
- To gather the views of staff, the inspectors took account of the responses to Ofsted's staff survey and held discussions with several of them.
- The inspectors spoke to parents to gather their views. The inspectors considered the responses, including free-text responses, to the survey, Ofsted Parent View.

Inspection team

Mark Sim, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Richard Fordham	Ofsted Inspector
Carley Holliman	Ofsted Inspector

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