

Inspection of a school judged outstanding for overall effectiveness before September 2024: St John the Evangelist CofE VA Primary School

Bluebell Way, Shilton Park, Carterton, Oxfordshire OX18 1JF

Inspection dates:

13 and 14 May 2025

Outcome

St John the Evangelist CofE VA Primary School has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

This friendly and vibrant school fosters a love of learning, creating an inspiring environment for pupils. Teachers have high ambitions for pupils' achievement. Pupils are enthusiastic and hard-working and achieve well. They take pride in their work and are proud of their successes. The school celebrates diversity and inclusivity, ensuring that everyone is included.

Teachers present lessons in engaging and innovative ways to capture pupils' interest effectively. Pupils listen attentively to adults and answer their questions with enthusiasm. They secure deep knowledge and confidence, allowing them to learn well. Pupils show impressive conduct and attitudes to their learning. If a pupil struggles to manage their emotions, staff quickly help them focus on learning, with great skill and kindness. From the early years, staff instil well-structured, positive learning behaviours to support effective learning.

The curriculum is enriched through various activities, such as visits to art galleries, performances at prominent venues and participation in charity fundraising events. The school offers a wide range of sporting opportunities, where pupils excel and enjoy participating. Pupils know that if they have a concern or worry, adults will listen to them and provide support. This helps pupils to feel happy and safe and thrive in their learning.

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

The school has a rich and ambitious curriculum. It outlines the important knowledge and skills pupils should learn. Well-chosen and engaging teaching activities immerse pupils in learning. Teachers use their secure subject knowledge to deepen pupils' understanding across the curriculum. For instance, in design and technology, pupils apply their understanding of forces in science to design and construct model volcanoes that simulate explosions using pneumatics. In history, pupils draw on their knowledge of astronauts to write engaging pieces about space exploration. Pupils quickly become eager and confident learners.

Teachers deliver the curriculum expertly and design activities that help pupils to learn exceptionally well. They explain important concepts and key vocabulary clearly. Teachers check effectively that pupils understand new content. They correct pupils' misconceptions promptly and address any gaps in knowledge as they occur. In the early years, children love to explore new concepts and are inquisitive learners. They flourish due to structured learning and attentive care. On entering school, children receive support to develop their speech and language skills through activities such as listening to rhymes, storytelling and role-play. In mathematics, children develop and secure mathematical fluency through repeated practice, such as counting and singing songs.

The school actively encourages a love for reading, through activities such as visits to the school library and adults reading to pupils. The school provides thorough training for all staff, who deliver the phonics programme consistently and expertly. Reading is skilfully weaved through the curriculum, enabling pupils to study important texts linked to their learning. Staff ensure that pupils quickly learn to read. Any pupils who fall behind receive support straight away to help them catch up.

The school has high aspirations for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The school promptly and accurately identifies pupils' needs. Teachers provide tailored support by expertly adapting lessons to personalise pupils' learning. Pupils with SEND fully access the same ambitious curriculum as their peers.

Pupils have superb attitudes to learning and behave very well. They listen diligently and work hard in lessons. Pupils are polite, welcoming and supportive of each other. Classrooms are calm and focused places in which to learn. The school offers high-quality pastoral care for pupils requiring behavioural and emotional support. Older pupils are proud to be positive role models for younger children. Outside, playtimes are joyous and active, with a wide range of sporting and creative activities for pupils.

The school's commitment to pupils' broader development is exemplary. Pupils study different cultures and religions, gaining insights into the significance and importance of diversity. The school offers an extensive range of well-considered clubs and events to develop pupils' character, interests and talents. Staff teach pupils about fundamental British values and their relevance in daily life. For example, pupils are taught how elections work when voting for pupil leadership roles. Pupils relish the opportunity to take on responsibilities, such as being well-being champions, language leaders and sports

leaders. Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe, including when using the internet and riding their bike on the road. They understand how to stay healthy, both physically and mentally. Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.

Governors conduct their responsibilities with commitment and dedication. They challenge and support school leaders effectively. The school offers carefully planned professional development opportunities for staff. Staff feel supported by leaders, who consider their workload and well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Background

Until September 2024, on a graded (section 5) inspection we gave schools an overall effectiveness grade, in addition to the key and provision judgements. Overall effectiveness grades given before September 2024 will continue to be visible on school inspection reports and on Ofsted's website. From September 2024, graded inspections will not include an overall effectiveness grade. This school was, before September 2024, judged outstanding for its overall effectiveness.

We have now inspected the school to determine whether it has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at that previous inspection. 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's work has improved significantly or that it may not be as strong as it was at the last inspection, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection. A graded inspection 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 first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be outstanding for overall effectiveness in January 2020.

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	133532
Local authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	10379840
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	472
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Mark Winch
Headteacher	Mark Smith
Website	www.st-john.oxon.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	28 and 29 January 2020, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Church of England Diocese of Oxford. The school's last section 48 inspection was carried out in June 2024.
- The school runs its own breakfast and after-school club.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- 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. 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, the deputy headteacher, staff and pupils.
- The inspector spoke with a representative from the local authority and the diocese. He also met representatives from the governing body.

- The inspector visited a sample of lessons, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspector considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. The inspector also considered the responses to Ofsted's online survey for staff.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of 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

Darren Aisthorpe, lead inspector

Ofsted 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 2025