

# Inspection of a good school: St John's Church of England Primary School, Lacey Green

Main Road, Lacey Green, Princes Risborough, Buckinghamshire HP27 0PL

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Inspection dates:

27 and 28 April 2022

## Outcome

St John's Church of England Primary School, Lacey Green continues to be a good school.

## What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils at St John's are part of a happy and inclusive community. Leaders ensure that pupils achieve well in school and become active participants in the wider community. Leaders have high expectations of pupils' effort and behaviour. Pupils enjoy their lessons and take pride in working hard and getting along well with each other.

Pupils remember what they have been taught about how to recognise and respond to different kinds of bullying. Pupils are certain that staff will act swiftly to stop any bullying that may occur. Pupils feel safe in school. This is because they know that there is always a trusted adult with whom they can share any worries or concerns.

Leaders provide many opportunities to promote pupils' personal development. These include a varied range of after-school clubs, such as those for gardening and Danish longball. These clubs are complemented by a strong curriculum that enables pupils to develop as well-rounded young people who make a positive contribution to society. For example, pupils work as school councillors and recently cheered the community by placing 'pots of joy' flower tubs around the village.

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

Leaders have developed an ambitious curriculum. In most subjects, the curriculum has been organised to ensure that pupils build their knowledge and skills over time. Leaders plan for pupils' vocabulary to develop progressively. Teachers make sure that pupils remember and apply the knowledge that they have previously learned. For example, in history, pupils know that the Mayans were skilled architects and mathematicians. They make links with other civilisations, such as the Egyptians. They compare pyramids and temples as fine examples of architecture and religious buildings.

However, this is not consistently the case in some subjects where leaders are newer to their roles. In these subjects, leaders are still ensuring that the content of the curriculum progresses logically from early years through to Year 6. Currently, teachers' checking of how much pupils already know and remember is not as developed as it could be. Occasionally, this means that teachers do not take full account of what pupils know and remember before moving on to new learning. Sometimes, teachers do not plan learning that is demanding enough for some pupils. Consequently, some pupils do not achieve as well as they could.

Reading is a high priority in the school. Leaders provide pupils with a wide range of high-quality books. As soon as pupils join the school, they learn to read in a systematic way. Daily phonics sessions are carefully structured. Books are typically well matched to the letters and sounds that pupils are learning. Staff regularly check how successfully pupils learn new sounds. If pupils fall behind, staff provide timely support. There is a very strong focus on ensuring that pupils acquire a wide vocabulary in every class. Pupils love to read, and they talk about books with great enthusiasm.

Pupils enjoy mathematics. Leaders have set out the order in which pupils will learn new knowledge, so that pupils build their understanding and skills securely. Teachers take the time to explain the learning. They provide regular opportunities for pupils to recap their mathematical knowledge and skills. This starts as soon as children join the Reception class. Teachers provide tasks related to children's learning. For example, children build their understanding of number by counting logs in the outdoor area. Staff ask questions such as, 'How many more do I need to make 10?', so that children can apply their understanding.

Staff provide effective support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). They ensure that pupils with SEND successfully access the full curriculum. Staff ensure that resources suit pupils' needs. Leaders communicate well with parents and carers. They work well with external agencies to get extra support for any pupil who needs it.

Leaders support pupils to be confident and resilient and to develop strength of character. They provide opportunities for pupils to be responsible. This begins in Reception Year, where children serve as the 'special helper' of the day. Pupils know that their views are valued. Staff promote equality of opportunity and diversity very effectively. Pupils know how to eat healthily and keep fit. Opportunities to learn beyond the classroom reduced due to the COVID-19 pandemic. However, leaders are quickly reinstating these.

Leaders, including governors and trustees, are skilled and know the school well. Representatives of the multi-academy trust provide regular evaluations for school leaders. They fulfil their statutory responsibilities. Leaders work very well with staff. Leaders take account of staff workload well. Staff are positive about school leaders and the professional support they receive from the trust.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Safeguarding practice is strong. It underpins all aspects of school life. Effective policies and procedures ensure that all adults know what to do to keep children safe. Leaders have established a culture of vigilance, so that they are able to identify pupils who are at risk of harm. Leaders make sure that children and families who are in need of additional support can access this quickly. Pupils feel safe in school and know where to go for help if they need it. They are confident that their concerns will be dealt with well. Pupils have a clear, age-appropriate knowledge of how to keep themselves safe when online.

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

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

- The curriculum in some of the foundation subjects is not yet as effective as it could be. Subject leaders who are new to their role have not yet ensured that progression in the curriculum from early years to Year 6 is fully secure. Senior leaders should develop the roles of subject leaders so that curriculum progression and organisation are highly effective.
- Teachers do not check how much pupils already know and remember effectively enough in some subjects. Teachers do not adapt the curriculum as well as they could. This means that some pupils, at times, are not building their knowledge and skills quite as well as they could be. Leaders should ensure that, across all foundation subjects, teachers are well equipped to check what pupils know, so that they can plan suitable next steps in pupils' learning.

## **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 a section 8 inspection of a good or outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the section 8 inspection a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the predecessor school, St John's Church of England Primary School, to be good in November 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.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

## **Further information**

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	145422
<b>Local authority</b>	Buckinghamshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10227001
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	227
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Malcom Peckham
<b>Headteacher</b>	Ian Newton
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.stjohnsce.org">www.stjohnsce.org</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- St John's Church of England Primary School converted to become an academy school in February 2018. When its predecessor school, also called St John's Church of England Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good overall.
- The school currently uses no alternative provision.

## Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school had received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders, and has taken that into account in her evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with senior leaders and members of the governing body, including the chair. The inspector also met with the chief executive officer and the director of education of the multi-academy trust.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, the inspector discussed 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 spoke to leaders of other curriculum areas.
- The inspector examined a range of school documentation, including leaders' self-evaluation, improvement plans and documentation relating to attendance and behaviour.
- The inspector met with the designated safeguarding lead. She considered the safeguarding policy, training records and examples of safeguarding concerns.
- The inspector considered the responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, and the responses to Ofsted's free-text service. The inspector also considered the responses to the staff survey and the pupil survey.

### **Inspection team**

Clare Morgan, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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