

Inspection of St Frideswide Church of England Primary School

Cricket Road, Oxford, Oxfordshire OX4 3DR

Inspection dates: 17 and 18 October 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

The headteacher of this school is Hannah Forder-Ball. This school is part of Oxford Diocesan Schools Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Anne Deller, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Kathy Winrow MBE.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils thrive in this happy place, where kindness is at the heart of the school community. Staff give genuine care and support to all pupils. Pupils are respected, valued and feel safe. They are confident to talk about any concerns that they may have and know that staff will do their best to help them.

The school is highly ambitious that all pupils will learn a rich and interesting curriculum, going beyond academic subjects to ensure that pupils develop skills for life. Consequently, pupils are very engaged and keen to learn. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), achieve well. In lessons, pupils listen carefully to adults' instructions and are keen to learn.

Pupils set themselves, and achieve, high standards of behaviour. They respect each other, show good manners and are polite. Pupils exemplify the school's values of 'joy, courage and justice'. Parents and carers are highly positive about the school. One comment which typifies the school was: 'I cannot praise the staff at the school enough for their commitment, positivity and drive for ensuring that every child has the chance to succeed.'

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

Supported notably by the trust, the school has overhauled its curriculum, ensuring that it is broad and balanced. The changes made are having a positive impact on standards in the school. Ambition is high, starting in the pre-school. Across the curriculum the important knowledge, skills and subject-specific vocabulary that pupils need to learn and remember is ordered carefully. This ensures that new curriculum content builds firmly on pupils' previous learning.

While the new curriculum is fit for purpose, the legacy of the past is still present in places. Some pupils have gaps in their understanding of what they should have learned previously. As a result, while standards are now improving, and pupils currently in the school are achieving well, national test outcomes in key stage 1 and key stage 2 in 2022 remained below average.

Teachers deliver the curriculum effectively. They have strong knowledge of their subjects. They explain new concepts with precision, and use questioning well to check pupils' understanding successfully. As a result, many pupils can confidently recall what they are learning, using the appropriate subject language. Teachers use assessment information consistently well to check that that pupils have understood new learning. They use this information to check misconceptions and offer support in a timely manner.

Staff identify pupils' additional needs quickly and accurately, collaborating closely with other professionals when needed. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are supported effectively and have access to the full curriculum, like their classmates, through careful adaptations.

Reading is prioritised. Pupils have access to a range of interesting books from the moment they start in pre-school. They are prepared well for learning phonics, which helps them to become fluent readers. Teachers regularly assess pupils' reading progress. Those pupils who need additional help receive effective support to catch up. Pupils have access to carefully selected texts to help them develop a love of reading.

Attendance is a high priority for the school. Despite the school's extensive and determined efforts, too many pupils miss school on a regular basis. Although the school is securing improvements, leaders at all levels know that some pupils risk falling behind with their learning. This is particularly the case for pupils with SEND or pupils who are vulnerable. In other respects, the attitude of pupils towards school is highly positive.

Pupils experience an exceptionally well planned personal development programme. They understand about British values and the importance of diversity. Pupils learn valuable life skills such how to use a washing machine, managing money, life-saving skills and cooking. Leaders identify and provide precise opportunities to develop pupils' talents and interests, including boxing, karate, cycling and outdoor adventure skills. Pupils learn how to become thoughtful and resilient individuals. They develop their own leadership skills through responsibilities such as school councillors, wellness ambassadors and eco-warriors. There is a great sense of working together as a team. At lunchtime, the family-style service enables pupils to take turns serving lunch, starting in Reception Year, where adults support children to get involved in this.

The trust, governors, and leaders at all levels are highly committed to providing the best possible opportunities for all pupils. They have an insightful understanding of the school's current strengths and areas for development. Delegated responsibilities are carried out effectively and the effectiveness of systems is routinely evaluated. There is a trusting and inclusive culture in which staff feel valued. Leaders prioritise staff well-being and ensure that staff workload is manageable.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Historical weaknesses in the curriculum mean that not all pupils have learned the full knowledge, skills and subject-specific vocabulary that leaders intend across the curriculum. This impedes the ability of some to access the current curriculum at the correct planned level. The trust should ensure that successful implementation of the new curriculum fills the remaining gaps in pupils' knowledge, so that pupils achieve the desired curriculum outcomes as planned.
- Too many pupils, including some of the most vulnerable and those with SEND, do not attend school often enough. This means they miss valuable learning, develop gaps in their understanding and find it hard to remember key knowledge and skills. The trust

should ensure that its work with parents results in these pupils improving their attendance at school.

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	148247
Local authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	10288102
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	302
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Kathy Winrow MBE
Headteacher	Hannah Forder-Ball
Website	www.stfrideswides.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- St Frideswide Primary School joined Oxford Diocesan Schools Trust in November 2020. When its predecessor school, as part of an all-through academy, St Gregory the Great Catholic School was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be inadequate.
- The pre-school provision caters for three-year-old children.
- The school runs a breakfast club and after-school club.
- The school uses no alternative provision.
- This school is a Church of England school in the Diocese of Oxford.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- 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.
- Inspectors held a wide range of meetings and spoke with headteacher, deputy headteachers, phase leaders, the special educational needs and disabilities coordinator, and teaching and support staff.
- The lead inspector spoke with members of the local governing body.
- The lead inspector met with the chair of the board for Oxford Diocesan Schools Trust. He also met the trust's chief executive officer.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, art, history and music. For each deep dive, the inspectors 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.
- Inspectors met with a range of pupils to discuss their views about the school and talked to pupils during playtimes and in lessons.
- Responses to Ofsted Parent View, Ofsted's online survey for parents, including parents' free-text comments, were considered. The inspectors also considered the responses to Ofsted's online survey for staff. The pupil survey was available to the school but there were no responses.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of the safeguarding arrangements in the school, the inspectors spoke to members of staff and pupils. The lead inspector met with the designated safeguarding lead and a deputy safeguarding lead to discuss the school's policies and procedures. During these meetings, records were scrutinised, including those relating to the safer recruitment of staff.

Inspection team

Darren Aisthorpe, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Kimberley Kemp	Ofsted Inspector
Katherine Russell	Ofsted Inspector

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