

Inspection of a good school: Crowmarsh Gifford Church of England School

Old Reading Road, Crowmarsh Gifford, Wallingford, Oxfordshire OX10 8EN

Inspection dates:

25 and 26 April 2023

Outcome

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of good as a result of this ungraded (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might not be as high if a graded (section 5) inspection were carried out now. Inspectors are recommending the next inspection to be a graded inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are proud to attend this nurturing village school. They understand the school's values of 'kindness, resilience, integrity, courage and curiosity' and can talk about how these values help them with their learning. When asked for an example, one pupil said, 'We are resilient in lessons like maths, our teachers encourage us to try and try again.' Pupils are kind and thoughtful, and older pupils show mature understanding of complex concepts such as stereotyping and democracy.

Pupils feel safe and consistently model positive relationships with each other and staff. They enjoy responsibilities such as being librarians and cloakroom monitors. They help each other by leading games and activities at breakfast club and during playtimes. Pupils are enthusiastic about their after-school clubs. They benefit from musical opportunities such as learning to play violin, clarinet and taking part in the school choir. However, the school's range of extra-curricular activities was reduced during the COVID-19 pandemic and has not yet returned to the same offer.

Pupils try their best. Leaders are in the process of developing the curriculum and are beginning to ensure that there are more consistent approaches to teaching and learning, including the teaching of early reading and phonics.

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

Leaders prioritise phonics and early reading. Phonics teaching begins from the start of Reception and this builds on strong provision in pre-school. Staff promote reading for pleasure across the school and use carefully chosen texts to help pupils develop a love of books and stories. In phonics, staff check how well pupils have learned and give any pupils who have fallen behind extra practice that helps them to catch up. However, reading books that pupils take home are not always matched closely to the sounds that

they have learned. This means that some pupils, particularly those who struggle with reading, are not learning to read as well as they should. Leaders identify pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and ensure that these pupils get additional support. Leaders engage effectively with outside agencies and help staff to understand some pupils' specific needs, for example through recent training on autism spectrum disorder.

Leaders are clear about the current strengths and weaknesses of the curriculum. In some subjects, leaders have identified what pupils need to learn precisely and have planned sequences of lessons that help pupils build their knowledge over time. In some year groups, such as pre-school and Year 6, staff have secure subject knowledge and teach in highly effective ways. Some staff use efficient and effective approaches to check how well pupils are learning. However, these aspects of the quality of education are not consistently effective across the school.

Staff are thoughtful in helping to prepare pupils for their next stage of education. There are a growing number of trips and visits that enrich pupils' curriculum experiences. For example, pupils make connections between lessons and trips such as the Year 3 visit to Earth Trust and Year 6 lessons about the Stone Age. Pupils enjoy events such as a visiting theatre company coming into school, camping on the field and village walks.

Staff have consistently high expectations for pupils' behaviour. In lessons, pupils work with focused and engaged approaches, with no examples of low-level disruption. Pupils respond quickly to class teachers' instructions. Leaders are determined for all pupils to experience success during their school day and have established a behaviour policy that is clear and understood by all staff and pupils. Pupils have consistently positive attitudes to their learning. They are polite, respectful towards each other and towards adults. One pupil said, 'The best thing about the school is that everyone is kind, and we all try to be kind to each other.' Another pupil said, 'Teachers encourage you; they make everything fun and give us confidence.'

Leaders are highly committed to improving the school. Leaders are mindful of staff workload and well-being. They are working hard to minimise the impact of positive changes at the school. Although some governors are new to their roles, governors are developing their knowledge of how to support and challenge school leaders effectively and are determined to help the school to realise the ambition of leaders and the dedicated whole-school community. Parents value school staff and the sense of community. Many share praise for the newly appointed headteacher and the dedicated team. As one parent said, 'Staff know the children well and make sure that they nurture each of them individually...the result is happy, confident children.'

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff receive appropriate training so that they can identify when a child needs help. Records show that staff report any concerns swiftly and leaders take robust action. Pupils understand how they can keep themselves safe, including when they are online. Record-

keeping is detailed and sets out concerns, actions and outcomes. Governors use audit processes and challenge leaders to assure themselves that safeguarding is effective. Overall, leaders take a proactive approach to ensuring that a strong culture of safeguarding exists at the school. They ensure that policies and procedures are up to date and adopt an 'it could happen here' approach, taking nothing for granted.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some books that the weakest readers take home to help them learn to read are not matched to the sounds that they have learned. This means that some pupils do not always make the progress that they should. Leaders should implement the new phonics scheme consistently, ensuring that all staff are fully trained and reading books help all pupils to develop fluency and accuracy.
- In some subjects, leaders are still developing the curriculum to identify the precise knowledge and vocabulary that they want pupils to learn and how this should be implemented. This leads to pupils having gaps in their knowledge. Leaders should ensure that clear, cumulative knowledge is in place for all curriculum subjects, with agreed approaches for how to teach and help all pupils to learn well.
- Assessment information in the wider curriculum is not precise enough in order to show what pupils know and understand. As a result, pupils have gaps in subject-specific knowledge. Leaders need to ensure that teachers check what pupils know and can do in efficient and effective ways.

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 school to be good in November 2012.

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](#)' 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

Unique reference number	123133
Local authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	10256442
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	231
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Angus Brettell
Headteacher	Vania Eaglen
Website	www.crowmarshgiffordprimary.com
Date of previous inspection	4 October 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Crowmarsh Gifford Church of England School is a single-form entry voluntary-controlled primary school with on-site nursery provision.
- The school is part of the Diocese of Oxford.
- The school's most recent Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools was on 22 May 2019.
- The school does not currently use alternative provision.
- The school runs breakfast and after-school clubs on site.
- There have been changes in staff and governors since the previous inspection, including the appointment of a new headteacher.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in his evaluation of the school.

- The lead inspector completed deep dives in early reading, mathematics and history. To do this, he met with subject leaders, had discussions with staff and pupils, visited lessons and looked at pupils' work.
- The lead inspector scrutinised a range of documents, including leaders' evaluation of the school and priorities for improvement.
- The lead inspector met with senior leaders, a selection of subject leaders, teachers, support staff, parents and pupils.
- The lead inspector spoke with a representative from the Diocese of Oxford, members of the local governing body and a representative of Oxfordshire Local Authority.
- The lead inspector reviewed the arrangements for safeguarding by scrutinising records and through discussions with staff and pupils.
- The views of pupils, parents and staff were considered through discussions and a review of Ofsted's surveys.

Inspection team

Carl McCarthy, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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