

Kirtlington Church of England Primary School

Heyford Road, Kirtlington, Kidlington, Oxfordshire OX5 3HL

Inspection dates

9–10 January 2019

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Leadership is effective. The headteacher drives the school forward with passion and determination. Recent leadership appointments have increased capacity for improvement. As a result, pupils are making good progress from their starting points in a range of subjects.
- Governance is strong. The governing body has developed good communication across the school community. Governors know what the school does well and what could be even better.
- Safeguarding throughout the school is effective. Pupils learn skills that keep them safe, including when learning online.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is a strength of the school. A wide range of experiences enhances their development to ensure that pupils are ready for life in modern Britain.
- The quality of teaching is good. Teachers use their strong subject knowledge to structure learning well. They ask searching questions, which help pupils deepen their knowledge and understanding.
- Pupils enjoy learning, listen attentively in class and work cooperatively with their peers. They reflect the school's values to a high standard.
- Pupils' behaviour is good around the school. Pupils take care of one another, for example by ensuring that everyone is included in games. School is a happy place for them.
- Pupils develop into successful learners because provision for their personal development and welfare is good. Pupils take an active part in the day-to-day running of the school. As a result, pupils thrive and grow in confidence.
- Pupils achieve well. Standards of reading, writing and mathematics are high. Current pupils are making good progress in these areas across the school.
- The curriculum provides pupils with some exciting and memorable learning experiences. However, there are gaps in coverage and in the skills pupils should be acquiring across different subjects.
- Early years provision requires improvement. Following a period of staffing turbulence, children's attainment dipped in 2018. Staffing has very recently stabilised. However, adults are not yet using their assessments well enough to support children's learning.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching in the early years by ensuring that adults use assessment to plan appropriate next steps and support learning for children.
- Ensure that teaching of the wider curriculum is well sequenced to support pupils in covering it all and in developing their specific skills across a range of subjects.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher leads the school well. She has wisely sought support from the local authority in steering the school through a period of organisational and staffing change. She has ensured that everyone is kept well informed. As a result, there is an air of calm purposefulness throughout the school. Everyone has taken the changes in their stride. Morale is high and standards are rising.
- The English leader has been effective in raising standards. Staff describe how their subject knowledge and confidence have been developed through recent training. The impact of this can be seen in the quality of writing in pupils' books and in improved progress information.
- Leaders have ensured that strong links have been forged with the community and with other local schools. Staff have benefited from this outward-looking approach, visiting and learning from other schools. Pupils benefit from the wide range of visitors and curriculum enrichment opportunities this approach has facilitated.
- Leadership for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is effective. Learning for this group of pupils is carefully planned and incorporates the views of parents, carers, and teachers and other professionals. The special educational needs coordinator ensures that these pupils receive the right support so that they can make good progress from their starting points.
- Additional sports funding is used well by leaders to inspire pupils to participate in physical activities. Pupils show great enthusiasm when taking part in tournaments, and relish competing on behalf of Kirtlington. Leaders' commitment to providing a wealth of enjoyable sporting activities ensures that pupils develop positive attitudes to physical activity.
- Leaders' work in developing pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding is highly effective. Pupils are respectful and demonstrate a keenness to be supportive and kind to each other. The firm emphasis leaders place on promoting the school's values, alongside the rich opportunities to learn about different cultures and religions, ensures that pupils develop tolerance, understanding and broad positive attitudes. For example, pupils told the inspector how a whole-school trip to BAPS Shri Swaminarayan Mandir in London had developed their understanding of Hinduism.
- Parents are very supportive of Kirtlington. They like the approachable staff and the warm relationships that are found throughout the school. One comment, typical of many, was: 'Every child is made to feel valued and encouraged to make a contribution to school and community life.'
- Leaders have ensured that the curriculum engages pupils and provides learning experiences that spark their interest. For instance, during the inspection, pupils in upper key stage 2 were enthusiastically exploring how to slow down the motorised fairground-ride models they had made, using their knowledge of air resistance. Nevertheless, some aspects of the curriculum, notably modern foreign languages, are not covered sufficiently. In some subjects, such as science, leaders have not ensured

that the curriculum has systematically planned opportunities to develop their pupils' subject-specific skills.

Governance of the school

- Governors know the school well. They visit regularly and organise themselves efficiently to monitor the school's effectiveness. They have ensured that, between them, they have a wide range of appropriate skills to help them fulfil their duties effectively.
- Appropriately, they review a range of evidence, including pupils' progress information and reports from their external school improvement partner, to monitor and challenge leaders' work effectively. Importantly, they have developed good communication with all members of the school community. This helps to ensure that they know what is working well and what leaders must do to improve the school further.
- Governors oversee well the school's financial management. For instance, they know that there are challenges to sustainability and leadership associated with the small school numbers. They have developed a customised response and plan in order to help them to fulfil appropriately their financial obligations.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders have created a strong safeguarding culture that permeates the school. When recruiting new staff, all appropriate background checks are made, and thorough induction ensures that staff know the systems and procedures to help keep pupils safe. Regular training and updates ensure that staff know of any changes or developments in child protection matters. As a result, staff are suitably knowledgeable in protecting children from harm.
- Leaders conduct regular reviews of the premises. They make adaptations which help improve pupil safety, for instance through moving the area in which pupils are collected at the end of the day away from the road and by developing the school lobby area to improve security.
- All staff and parents who responded to the Ofsted surveys felt that pupils were safe at school. Pupils learn well how to keep themselves safe, including when online. They described how they learn to 'think, think, think before you click, click, click'.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good throughout the school. Current pupils learn well across a range of subjects, including reading, writing and mathematics.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge. They use this well to plan learning appropriately. They provide clear and concise explanations which develop pupils' knowledge effectively. Teachers ask searching questions which help deepen pupils' understanding and identify any misconceptions well.

- Teaching is well matched to pupils' needs. Teachers make effective links to pupils' prior learning, including their home learning. As a result, pupils are engaged and motivated learners who make good progress from their varying individual starting points.
- Teaching provides pupils with effective challenge. For instance, in upper key stage 2, pupils were working on increasingly complex division problems. Pupils were encouraged to apply a range of methods as they grew in confidence, to explore which was most efficient. Pupils grappled with the increasingly challenging calculations and worked diligently to complete the exercise accurately.
- The teaching of writing is providing pupils with regular opportunities to write for a range of purposes. Expectations of spelling, punctuation and grammar are consistently high. Pupils respond with well-crafted writing, using ambitious vocabulary, which is further developed by their rich reading diets.
- The support provided by teaching assistants is effective. They have strong subject knowledge and are well trained. Teaching assistants have high expectations of the pupils they work with, underpinned by good relationships and mutual respect. Consequently, the pupils they support work hard and achieve well.
- Teaching across the curriculum develops pupils' knowledge well. For example, in history, pupils contributed their knowledge of castles before organising common features into a castle timeline. As they explored a range of images, the teacher skilfully introduced appropriate vocabulary. Nevertheless, work in pupils' books indicates that pupils are not developing their subject-specific skills systematically enough in their written work, for example through developing the ability to draw accurate scientific conclusions.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- The school is a harmonious and purposeful environment in which everybody gets along well together. A pupil told the inspector, 'We generally are quite a friendly bunch of people'. The school's values weave through everyday activities. They are developed well through assemblies in which pupils often take the lead.
- Pupils receive high-quality care that supports their emotional well-being and boosts their confidence and self-esteem. Parents value the family feel and the opportunities for pupils to participate in the wider life of the school and community, which 'helps them grow in confidence and maturity'.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Poor behaviour rarely happens at Kirtlington. Pupils respond well to the high expectations of staff, demonstrating good behaviour, both in class and at play. Pupils are confident that bullying is not a problem at their school and that occasional disagreements, which they call 'friendship fallouts', are well managed by staff.

- Pupils enjoy learning. They listen attentively to their teachers and to their peers. They enthusiastically share their thoughts and ideas together in lessons. Pupils are resilient and independent learners. For instance, pupils were seen solving mathematical problems by working diligently in pairs before checking the accuracy of their work and identifying missed steps using a computer program.
- Pupils relish the opportunity to take on additional responsibilities. For example, a group of pupils have developed a plan to run a lunchtime club. They demonstrate a firm commitment to fulfilling these roles to the best of their ability. For instance, during lunchtime, a pupil canvassed popularity for taking part in a parachute game, before organising this carefully so that everyone was included.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- In the national assessments in 2018, a high proportion of pupils attained well in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 2. At the end of Year 6, a high proportion of pupils attained well in reading and mathematics, although fewer attained well in writing.
- Across the school, current pupils are achieving well in a range of subjects, including reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND, are making good progress from their starting points. Leaders' successful actions have led to a rise in pupils' progress in writing.
- Pupils' written outcomes demonstrate accuracy and flair across a range of genres. Their work contains careful attention to detail. Vocabulary is rich and well-crafted into sentences that show secure grammatical understanding.
- Pupils achieve well in phonics. The proportion who meet the standard expected for their age in the Year 1 phonics screening check is above that seen nationally. From this secure base, pupils go on to develop strong reading skills. Pupils read with a high degree of fluency and understanding.
- Pupils have a secure understanding of times tables and basic number operations. This helps them to become capable and confident mathematicians. Regular opportunities to apply their knowledge through problem solving both supports and extends their learning. As a result, they make good progress.
- Pupils with SEND have their needs met well. Teaching is skilfully adapted, and appropriate resources are used effectively to provide the support pupils need. As a result, they learn well and make strong progress in a range of subjects.
- Pupils make good progress broadly, across the wider curriculum. They achieve well in sport, music and the creative arts. Pupils' detailed knowledge of a wide range of religions is impressive. Pupils enjoy the exciting opportunities for design projects. However, written outcomes in science and the humanities are hampered by a lack of development of skills in these subjects. Pupils do not have enough opportunities for the development of skills in modern foreign languages.

Early years provision

Requires improvement

- In 2018, a smaller proportion of children than the national average attained a good level of development at the end of the early years. Levels of attainment in writing dipped.
- Following a period of staffing turbulence, during which the local authority supported school leaders, a stable staffing structure has now been achieved. However, this is a very recent development. Staff are not yet routinely using assessment effectively to inform the activities and learning conversations they have with children. As a result, teaching and interactions do not systematically extend children's progress because activities are not well enough matched to their needs.
- The learning environment excites children and invites investigation. For instance, during the inspection, children were fascinated when using magnifying glasses to explore natural materials collected on a learning walk. The outside learning environment, however, is not as well structured as inside in supporting learning, particularly in providing writing opportunities. Plans are rightly in place to develop this once the new teaching team is established.
- Staff ensure that systems to keep children safe in the early years are rigorous. For example, risk assessments are carried out carefully and accurately to ensure that the setting is a safe place in which to learn. Staff are trained well and know what actions to take to protect children from harm. All statutory welfare requirements are in place.
- Leaders have ensured that close links with the pre-school setting ease children's transition into the Reception Year. For instance, the pre-school children have their lunch at school every day. This helps to ensure that children settle quickly into school and are keen to attend.
- Phonics is taught effectively. Children demonstrate a strong and growing ability to apply phonics knowledge successfully to sound out new words. Disadvantaged children and those with SEND are supported well in developing phonics skills by well-trained staff.
- Records of children's learning now contain a wide range of evidence from across the early years curriculum. Parents contribute to these records by capturing 'wow' learning moments outside of school. Plans are in place to develop the parental contribution still further.

School details

Unique reference number	123187
Local authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	10088057

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	61
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sara Carey
Headteacher	Louise Williams
Telephone number	01869 350 210
Website	www.kirtlington.oxon.sch.uk
Email address	office.3500@kirtlington.oxon.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	14 May 2015

Information about this school

- Kirtlington School is much smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The headteacher was appointed in September 2015. Several teachers started in September 2018, including a new leader of English. There has been a number of teaching changes in the joint Reception and Year 1 class, and a newly qualified teacher started in January 2019. She is being supported by a more experienced part-time teacher and by a separate mentor.
- In response to a falling roll, the governors recently decreased the class structure by a class. Pupils are currently taught in three classes.
- Almost all pupils at the school are from White British or other White backgrounds. The proportion of students who speak English as an additional language is well below that found nationally.
- Very few pupils are supported by the pupil premium.

- The proportion of pupils with SEND is in line with the national average, although no pupils currently have an education, health and care plan.
- There are well-developed links with the separately run pre-school, which uses the premises and whose children have lunch in the school dining hall.
- As a voluntary aided school, religious education, the school ethos and collective worship are inspected separately under section 48 of the Education Act 2005. The most recent section 48 inspection was conducted on 29 January 2018.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector, accompanied by the headteacher, visited lessons across the school. Pupils were observed around the school, including during play and lunchtimes.
- The inspector looked at pupils' work in lessons, and checked pupils' books with subject leaders.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, governors and senior leaders. The inspector also met with a group of staff, including the newly qualified teacher.
- The inspector had telephone conversations with representatives from the local authority and the diocese.
- The inspector spoke formally to a group of pupils and heard them read, and spoke informally to other pupils on a tour of the school.
- A wide range of documentation was considered, including the school's self-evaluation, the development plan, governors' minutes, reports from the headteacher, information on pupils' progress and attainment, and records of behaviour and attendance. The inspector scrutinised records concerning safeguarding.
- The inspector took account of parents' views through the 33 responses to Parent View, including 18 free-text responses, as well as informal discussions. Staff views were also considered through the seven completed staff surveys.

Inspection team

Deborah Gordon, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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