

Inspection of a good school: Northleaze Church of England Primary School

Brook Close, Long Ashton, Bristol BS41 9NG

Inspection dates:

10 and 11 May 2022

Outcome

Northleaze Church of England Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy school. They work hard in lessons. Pupils understand and apply the school rules of 'be ready, be safe, be kind'. This ensures that pupils are polite and show respect to their peers. Pupils and staff build positive relationships with each other. Over time, pupils gain a strong sense of belonging. They welcome the 'family feel' of the school.

Pupils particularly like the large school grounds in which to play and learn. Pupils study a full range of subjects. Expectations of what pupils will learn have increased markedly over time. Pupils are well prepared for secondary school.

The curriculum enhances pupils' experiences and broadens their horizons. They learn about big ideas, such as increasing biodiversity in the locality. A highlight for many pupils is the 'raise the roof singing festival', or attending sports festivals with other schools. There is a range of extra-curricular clubs on offer, such as for science and art. Pupils take pride in their leadership responsibilities. For example, Year 6 reading buddies value the opportunities they have to listen to younger pupils read.

Pupils say that bullying happens rarely. They are confident that when pupils fall out with others, staff and the anti-bullying ambassadors sort it out quickly.

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

Senior leaders have high expectations of all staff and pupils. Determined work is ensuring that the school continues to improve. Governors hold leaders to account stringently. Leaders make sure that staff access the array of training available to them through the central trust services. This ensures that staff's subject knowledge is developed well.

Leaders' work to strengthen the current curriculum is embedding well. Most curriculum content is appropriately ambitious. Staff are introducing better sequences of work term by term and evaluating the success. Strong curriculum thinking underpins any changes that

take place from early years to Year 6. For example, in history, there is careful thought given to the organisation of curriculum content.

Nonetheless, leaders' work to tackle some relative inconsistencies in the implementation of the curriculum has stalled due to COVID-19. Staff absence has been high across the school. Leaders' checks have been less substantial than before. On occasions, some teaching is not adjusted precisely enough. As a result, a small proportion of pupils do not get the specific support they need as they move through some sequences of work. A minority of teaching does not go into the depth that leaders expect. This holds some pupils back.

There are well-established approaches to teaching early reading. Staff ensure that the books that pupils read match the sounds they know. Pupils at the early stages of reading get lots of practice and this is increasing their confidence to read. From early years to Year 6, there is a sharp focus on teaching ambitious vocabulary. Recent changes are bolstering the school's approach to teaching language comprehension. Pupils are responding well to these heightened expectations and most talk proficiently about what they read.

The mathematics curriculum is well thought out. All pupils access it. Most staff have strong subject knowledge and use it skilfully. Leaders' exacting approach to ensure that staff adapt the mathematics curriculum to prioritise the most important content is making a notable difference. As a result, most pupils who fell behind during the COVID-19 restrictions now apply their secure mathematical knowledge and skills to solve problems and explain their understanding.

Staff know pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) well. Most pupils with SEND gain a firm grounding of essential knowledge across the curriculum. Increasingly, leaders commission specialist support to assess pupils' needs. They use this information to improve the learning for these pupils in school. However, leaders' work to check the impact of this is at an early stage.

Leaders and teachers provide many opportunities to develop pupils as well-rounded young citizens. There is a clear focus on pupils' mental and physical health. The curriculum ensures that pupils learn about democracy and staff make this relevant to pupils, for example, when applying to be a school councillor and learning about the Bristol Referendum 2022. Pupils learn about equalities and the importance of accepting difference.

Almost every parent and carer would recommend the school to another parent.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure that all staff receive regular training and ongoing updates about how to keep pupils safe. Staff understand and use their training proficiently. They are quick to

spot pupils who may be at risk of harm and to refer any concerns. Leaders are swift to take action to reduce pupils' risk of harm. Leaders' record-keeping is precise and detailed.

The curriculum teaches pupils how to keep safe when online and the importance of healthy relationships.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- At times, teaching is not adapted astutely to prioritise the most important knowledge pupils need to know next. This hampers pupils' progress through the curriculum because sequences of learning miss out important knowledge. Leaders must ensure that all staff use assessment precisely to ensure that sequences of work build firmly on what pupils already know.
- Leaders' checks to assure themselves of curriculum quality are not sufficiently rigorous. There are some inconsistencies in the implementation of the curriculum. This means that a minority of pupils do not gain the depth of knowledge they could. Leaders must ensure that their checks identify any relative weaknesses in curriculum quality, and then act on these swiftly.

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 second section 8 inspection since we judged the predecessor school, Northleaze Church of England Primary School, to be good in June 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.

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

Unique reference number	145264
Local authority	North Somerset
Inspection number	10227707
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	198
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Adele Haysom
Headteacher	Victoria Reyes
Website	www.northleaze.n-somerset.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school is part of Lighthouse Schools Partnership. This is a multi-academy trust of 25 schools.
- The school has a Nursery class for three- and four-year-olds. It opened in September 2021.
- There is a before- and after-school club on site. This is registered with Ofsted and did not form part of this school inspection.

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 the headteacher, senior leaders, the leader of special educational needs and/or disabilities and with other staff members.
- The inspector met members of the local academy board, central trust staff, the chief executive officer and a trustee.

- The inspector carried out deep dives in early 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 pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The inspector listened to pupils read.
- The inspector also spoke to leaders about the school's approach to pastoral support and personal, social and health education.
- The inspector considered how well the school protects pupils and keeps them safe.
- The inspector considered responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, along with the additional free-text comments. She also considered responses to the pupil and staff surveys.

Inspection team

Julie Carrington, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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