

Inspection of a good school: Christopher Rawlins Church of England Primary School

Aynho Road, Adderbury, Banbury, Oxfordshire OX17 3NH

Inspection dates:

10 and 11 July 2024

Outcome

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

The headteacher of this school is Lauren Murrey. This school is part of Oxford Diocesan Schools Trust (ODST), which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Anne Dellar, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Kathy Winrow.

What is it like to attend this school?

Parents are rightly effusive about the transformation they have seen, with one describing the school as being 'worlds apart' from the recent past, with 'a positive, happy and settled atmosphere'. The culture has been reset so that, as another parent explained, there is 'kindness, but with clear boundaries and expectations' from early years upwards. The mutually agreed school values of courage, responsibility and compassion set the tone and permeate daily life.

Classrooms are calm and industrious. Typically, pupils listen carefully and work hard, building their knowledge and skills over time. They learn to have a go and keep trying. A range of activities beyond the classroom gives pupils opportunities to try new things or become more proficient. Much-anticipated outdoor activities take them out of their comfort zone and teach important life skills. Sporting events with other schools are popular.

Pupils develop the confidence to do the right thing, and 'stand firm', for themselves and others in and beyond school. When occasionally needed, a gentle reminder to make a better choice invariably does the trick. Pupils are at ease talking about difference and the importance of treating everyone equally and with respect. Older pupils take their various leadership responsibilities and contributions to school life seriously.

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

The school has come out the other side of a turbulent period with renewed strength. As one parent was keen to point out, the approach is 'one hundred percent child first'. School leaders, the local governing body and the trust are single-minded in focusing in their respective roles on what will most benefit pupils. Testament to this is the investment of time and energy in recent times in ensuring that any additional needs pupils may have are identified accurately and in a timely fashion.

Expectations have been reset over the last 18 months, embedding a culture conducive to learning. Most parents make sure that, unless there is a very good reason, their children do not miss school. Behaviour management is rooted in the school's vision and values. Any hint of discriminatory language or hurtful behaviour is dealt with quickly and sensitively. Pupils learn how to look after their physical and mental health. They feel safe and secure in school, knowing that they can turn to any adult for help if they are worried about something.

Most pupils read well by the end of key stage 2. In the recent past, pupils have not necessarily all got off to the best start when learning to read. The majority now do, although some need a little longer to consolidate their skills. Early years and key stage 1 staff are well trained. Phonics teaching is precise. Pupils read carefully matched books to consolidate their learning. In class, teachers watch and listen as pupils say their sounds, correcting errors sensitively and picking out those pupils who need some extra practice. Teaching is adjusted and additional small group work planned on the back of regular meticulous assessments, which check which sounds pupils have remembered.

The unwavering focus over the last year and a half on what and how pupils learn is bearing fruit. The curriculum has been redesigned to build pupils' learning from early years through to Year 6. The important content they must remember is clearly identified, as is the vocabulary they need to know. Where published schemes have been used as a starting point, sensible adaptations have been made to make sure schemes are fit for purpose in mixed-age classes. Curriculum guidance is used to good effect. Teachers check at the start of units that pupils have remembered key information from previous learning and adapt what comes next accordingly. Wise use of external expertise has refined the thinking about English and mathematics provision for the better. So far, though, it has yet to bring about a step change in writing outcomes at the end of Year 6.

Training has enhanced teaching and learning. Mostly, teaching is engaging and accurate and firmly focused on what pupils need to learn. More often than not, it starts with the teacher modelling and explaining before pupils have a go together and then practise to consolidate their learning. Questions are used well to check pupils' understanding. The focus on ensuring that pupils can explain their thinking and apply their learning in mathematics from early years onwards is paying off. Training is equipping staff with greater understanding of, and strategies to meet, the increasing number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) in their classrooms. This is, though, not yet embedded or having the desired impact on learning for some of these pupils.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Work to review the progression of pupils' knowledge and skills in writing is fairly recent. Standards at the end of key stage 2 are not as strong as in reading and mathematics. The school should keep a close eye on teaching and the quality of pupils' writing to be assured that its plan is having the intended impact as pupils move through the school.
- Training to upskill all staff as teachers of pupils with SEND has only been prioritised in the last 18 months. As yet, the school's ambition for these pupils' achievement is not fully realised. The school should make sure it implements its plans to monitor provision for pupils with SEND and its impact carefully, making adjustments as needed.

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 predecessor school, Christopher Rawlins Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School, to be good in September 2014.

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	147716
Local authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	10322044
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	270
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Kathy Winrow
Headteacher	Lauren Murrey
Website	www.christopher-rawlins.oxon.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Christopher Rawlins converted to become an academy school in February 2020, joining ODST multi-academy trust. When the predecessor school of the same name was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good overall.
- The headteacher joined the school in January 2023. There have been several changes of headteacher since the last ungraded inspection of the predecessor school in March 2018 and significant staff turnover. Two-thirds of the current class teachers have joined over that period.
- The number of pupils that can be admitted to each year group increased to 45 six years ago, so currently all key stage 1 and 2 pupils are taught in mixed-age classes. Starting with the September 2025 Reception intake, the school will revert to admitting 30 pupils in each year group.
- An increase in the number of pupils with SEND over the last 18 months means that the proportions of pupils requiring school support or an education, care and health plan are higher than average.
- The religious character of the school is inspected separately. The last section 48 inspection took place in March 2024.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.

- Before- and after-school care and the holiday club are managed and inspected separately. After-school clubs are run by external providers.

Information about this inspection

- 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. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, the teaching and learning lead, the special educational needs and/or disabilities coordinator and the early years lead. The inspector also had discussions with members of the board of trustees, including the chief executive officer, and the local governing body and with school improvement advisers from ODST.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and physical education. For each deep dive, she discussed the curriculum with the subject leader, visited lessons, spoke to teachers, talked to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The inspector also listened to some pupils read to a familiar adult. She considered the school's curriculum in some other subjects through discussions with leaders and pupils, and by sampling pupils' work.
- Staff, parent and pupil views were gathered using Ofsted's surveys and by meeting with pupils and staff during the inspection. The inspector also talked to pupils around school and outside at breaktimes, and with staff as they went about their work.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.

Inspection team

Alison Bradley, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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