

Inspection of Spaxton CofE Primary School

High Street, Spaxton, Bridgwater, Somerset TA5 1BS

Inspection dates:	23 and 24 April 2025
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

The headteacher of this school is Rachel Rood. This school is part of Quantock Education Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Chrysta Garnett, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Rob Brown.

Ofsted has not previously inspected Spaxton CofE Primary School under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. However, Ofsted previously judged Spaxton CofE Primary School to be outstanding for overall effectiveness, before it opened as an academy. Since September 2024, schools have not been awarded an overall effectiveness grade.

What is it like to attend this school?

The school motto 'Together we flourish and achieve' permeates through the school. Pupils appreciate the support they gain from caring staff. They know that if they have any worries or concerns, their 'trusted adults' will help them. Pupils enjoy coming to school. The school works effectively to ensure that pupils attend regularly so that they do not miss out on important learning.

Staff are united in their vision of ensuring that pupils learn the curriculum successfully. The school has high expectations of what pupils can achieve through a broad and ambitious curriculum. Pupils rise to these and typically learn the curriculum well. The school is a calm and purposeful place where pupils want to learn. They value the recognition they receive from staff for being successful, such as the certificates that recognise if they have shown one of the school's values.

Pupils are encouraged to be responsible, active and respectful citizens. Through a variety of pupil leadership roles, they know they make a difference. Pupils value the trips to enhance the curriculum, such as to a local castle linked to their learning in history. They appreciate residential visits to help them to build their resilience and to learn more about nature.

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

The school is determined for pupils to be successful. Leaders at all levels, including those responsible for governance and the trust, are clear about its strengths and areas to further develop. There has been a sharp focus on the quality of education that pupils receive. Leaders have not shied away from making important decisions about the curriculum in the best interests of pupils.

Across subjects, the school has identified the knowledge and vocabulary pupils should learn. It has considered the needs of mixed-age classes well to ensure that pupils build their knowledge based on what they have learned before. Staff benefit from training with subject experts to develop their subject knowledge and confidence in teaching the curriculum. As a result, pupils typically learn the curriculum well, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). These pupils are identified early to ensure they get the support they need.

The school ensures pupils revisit what they have learned before. This helps them to secure knowledge into their long-term memory. However, in some subjects, pupils struggle to remember some of their learning. This is because pupils do not recall the most important knowledge they need to prepare them for future learning. As a result, some pupils find it harder to build their knowledge based on what they know and remember.

The school has refined the writing curriculum to ensure it is clear what pupils should learn, particularly to secure the basic transcription skills of spelling, grammar and punctuation. Pupils are given regular opportunities to practise and apply their transcriptional knowledge through writing widely and often across the curriculum.

However, this refined curriculum is in its early stages. As a result, some pupils make repeated errors in their written work across the curriculum that go unaddressed.

The school prioritises helping pupils to learn to read. Pupils are given time to practise the sounds they know to ensure that they become confident and fluent readers. The school checks how well pupils are learning to read and provides support to those who need help. The school promotes a love of reading. Pupils are exposed to a breadth of genres through both the reading curriculum and through the well-loved library. Pupils, as 'reading ambassadors', promote this with their peers by sharing books with each other during lunchtimes.

Pupils show positive attitudes to their learning. They engage well in lessons and know what is expected of them as they move around the school. During social times, pupils play well together.

The school teaches pupils about health, well-being and living in the wider world. Pupils know how to look after themselves and how to keep safe, including when online. The school supports pupils well to develop their talents and interests through clubs, sporting competitions and school performances.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, some pupils find it challenging to remember some of their previous learning. Consequently, they find it more difficult to build their knowledge based on what they know and remember. The trust should ensure that pupils revisit the most important knowledge they need to build their knowledge securely over time across the curriculum.
- Aspects of the writing curriculum are new and still being embedded. Staff do not consistently have a clear picture about the important transcriptional knowledge pupils must learn and by when. This affects how well some pupils are supported to resolve weaknesses in their writing across the curriculum. The trust should ensure that staff are clear about the writing knowledge that pupils must secure at each stage. It should ensure that staff have the expertise they need to implement the revised writing curriculum consistently well.

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	147324
Local authority	Somerset
Inspection number	10344824
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	47
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Rob Brown
CEO of the trust	Chrysta Garnett
Headteacher	Rachel Rood
Website	www.spaxton-school.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Spaxton CofE Primary School is part of Quantock Education Trust.
- The school is designated as having a religious character. The school is in the Diocese of Bath and Wells. The most recent section 48 inspection of the school was carried out in October 2022. The school should receive its next section 48 inspection within five school years.
- Since the previous inspection, there has been a change in headteacher. The headteacher joined the school in September 2020.
- This school is a smaller-than-average-sized primary school. Pupils are taught in three mixed-age classes.
- The school provides a before- and after-school club.
- The school currently uses one registered alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth form provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024 will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation 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 spoke with school leaders, those responsible for governance, including the chair of the trust, a representative from the diocese and trust leaders, including the CEO.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and geography. 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 also discussed the curriculum in some other subjects.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: 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.
- The lead inspector listened to pupils read to a familiar adult.
- The inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school site. Additionally, the inspectors spoke to pupils to discuss their views about the school.
- The inspectors considered responses to Ofsted's online survey for parents, Ofsted Parent View. Inspectors also considered responses to Ofsted's online survey for staff.

Inspection team

Esther Best, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Jyotsna Paranjape

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
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