

Inspection of a good school: Seer Green Church of England School

School Lane, Seer Green, Beaconsfield, Buckinghamshire HP9 2QJ

Inspection dates:

21 and 22 March 2023

Outcome

Seer Green Church of England School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils get a great deal at Seer Green. They are incredibly happy and love attending school. It is impressive how articulate and thoughtful the pupils are. Academically, they thrive. Many pupils leave Year 6 attaining very highly. Leaders set high academic expectations from the moment children begin in early years.

There is a friendly atmosphere wherever you go. Pupils eagerly greet visitors and want to show how proud they are of their school. Playtimes are joyful. Older pupils love mixing with their younger counterparts and being active in the outdoor environment. Bullying is not an issue because pupils say they will not let it happen. Pupils adamantly say they feel safe and that their friends are kind.

There is much on offer for pupils. Music is promoted, with many pupils learning a musical instrument or singing in the school choirs. Leaders ensure that all pupils have an opportunity to represent the school in sport. Pupils relish the range of school trips they can go on. Pupils see the forest school sessions as another highlight.

Community is so important to the school. Pupils help others in need and enthusiastically join in with local events. This includes hosting the village's longstanding 'Cherry Pie Fair'.

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

The new headteacher has quickly got to grips with evaluating the many strengths of the school and where areas still need to improve further. Parents unanimously praise what the school offers their children and value the clear direction from senior leaders. Staff cannot speak highly enough about working at Seer Green. They are highly positive about how leaders and trustees look out for them and develop their teaching and leadership skills. Everyone is rightly proud of how well pupils attain in reading and mathematics and the strong progress pupils make across key stage 2. Nevertheless, leaders know they need to redouble their energies on the very small number of pupils who are not learning to read quickly enough.

Pupils learn an ambitious and rich curriculum. Leaders recognise the strengths that exist within the core subjects. They are working on developing curriculum thinking in other foundation subjects. Here, leaders are checking that, within units of work, it is clear what knowledge must be taught. Sometimes, this knowledge is not precise enough, meaning teachers are not consistently planning the right activities. From time to time, teachers can mistakenly think that they need to create engaging tasks to enthuse pupils. This can sometimes dilute the purpose of what pupils need to know and remember. Leaders know where excellent practice exists, for example in mathematics, and are building on this to further improve other subjects.

Reading is highly valued by pupils. Teachers are excellent role models in promoting a love of books. Pupils enjoy making book recommendations to their peers. Pupils are immersing themselves in rich and interesting literature. The school is in its first year of implementing a new phonics programme. Children in Reception Year are making great strides. However, there does remain a small number of pupils who do not read confidently for their age. Leaders know they need to carefully ensure that pupils have enough quality time to focus on the building blocks of reading and writing that the phonics programme expertly provides.

Teachers present content clearly. They think carefully how best to teach it in sensible steps to support pupils' memory. Teachers regularly check pupils' understanding in lessons and over time. They build in repeated practice to help all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), retain new learning.

The leadership of the provision for pupils with SEND is a strength. Staff quickly pick up where pupils may require extra support. The additional support given to pupils with SEND makes a difference. Expectations are never watered down. Staff are ambitious for all pupils with SEND in learning and achieving well within the academic curriculum.

Pupils are motivated to learn. They behave well in class and work hard. Pupils know not to disturb others. Leaders are reinforcing greater consistency in setting clear routines and standards that all pupils must follow. Pupils are superb ambassadors for treating everyone equally, regardless of difference. They are welcoming to all.

Trustees are highly skilled and expertly led by the chair. They offer excellent strategic direction and have worked closely with the headteacher to set out the school's next phase of continuous improvement. Trustees fully understand their statutory duties. They keep a close eye on the school's performance and hold leaders to account for this.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Safeguarding is top of everyone's agenda. Leaders and trustees robustly ensure that all statutory requirements are met. When leaders and trustees meet, safeguarding is prioritised. Staff are well trained to know how to spot possible concerns. They quickly inform leaders about these. Leaders think smartly and know when they need to contact

children's services. Written records log detailed information about safeguarding concerns. Leaders work closely with families and offer early help where appropriate.

The up-to-date personal development programme provides pupils with what they need to develop their understanding of how to stay safe. This includes helping pupils know and identify different risks.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, component knowledge is not as well defined in some units of work. At times, the activity choices do not closely match the knowledge leaders want pupils to acquire. Leaders need to build on the strongest practice in the curriculum to ensure that, across all subjects, knowledge is identified and coherently sequenced.

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 July 2013.

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	139164
Local authority	Buckinghamshire
Inspection number	10227794
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	213
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Michael Phipps
Headteacher	Laura Morel
Website	www.seergreenceschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	23 March 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The headteacher joined the school in September 2022. There have also been other staff changes since the last inspection.
- Seer Green is part of the Diocese of Oxford and is a standalone academy. Its most recent section 48 inspection was in 2017.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The lead inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector spoke with senior leaders, staff and pupils. He also met with several trustees, including the chair, and a schools' adviser from the diocese.
- The inspector carried out deep dives into these subjects: early reading, mathematics and history. To do this, he met with subject teachers, looked at curriculum plans, had discussions with staff and pupils, visited lessons and looked at pupils' work.

- Some pupils were observed reading to a familiar adult by the lead inspector.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the lead inspector spoke with staff and pupils. He met with the designated safeguarding lead to examine record-keeping and actions. This included sampling a range of safeguarding documentation. He reviewed checks on the safer recruitment of adults.
- The inspector talked to pupils from different year groups about their learning and experiences at school.
- The views of staff, pupils and parents were gathered through discussions and Ofsted's online surveys.
- The inspector scrutinised a range of documentation provided by the school. This included leaders' self-evaluation and school improvement priorities, policies, curriculum documents, published information about pupils' performance, behaviour records, information about pupils with SEND and minutes of trustees' meetings.

Inspection team

James Broadbridge, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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