

Inspection of a good school: Dry Sandford Primary School

Lashford Lane, Dry Sandford, Abingdon, Oxfordshire OX13 6EE

Inspection date: 17 January 2023

Outcome

Dry Sandford Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

The strong ethos of nurture and support is embedded into everything the school does. The focus on helping pupils understand their behaviour is valued by pupils, staff and parents. Pupils feel happy and safe. They can explain, with maturity, what they can do to solve friendship problems. Bullying is rare and not tolerated. Pupils know that listening to others helps them to build successful friendships and relationships. Adults intervene when pupils ask for support.

Teachers have high expectations for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). They want pupils to love learning and be passionate about things that are important to them. Pupils enjoy learning, and most pupils are achieving well. They are confident to talk about school, what they learn and the trips and opportunities they have experienced. Parents recognise and value this. Older pupils appreciate the jobs they have in school. They understand the importance of being role models for younger pupils.

Pupils behave well and move around the school in a calm way. They are thoughtful and respectful to each other. They play well together. Older pupils help younger pupils at playtime to learn routines. The school rules are well established and understood by all.

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

Leaders have designed a curriculum for all pupils which is ambitious. Staff plan and teach the right knowledge, skills and vocabulary in the right order. They provide pupils with lots of opportunities to practise and apply their knowledge. This is helping most pupils to achieve well in a broad range of subjects. However, in some foundation subjects, sometimes leaders have not identified precisely enough the key knowledge they want pupils to learn. As a result, pupils do not always connect with or build on previous learning well enough.

Within many subjects, leaders have chosen topics which interest and engage their pupils

and help them to develop secure knowledge. In history, pupils are keen to learn about past events. This starts in the early years where younger children explore their own life and use historical vocabulary like past, present and future. Pupils visit local places to deepen their knowledge. Pupils enjoyed their visit to a Saxon tower to learn more about the Stone Age. Where needed, teachers regularly check pupils' progress. They are swift to identify any gaps in learning and provide effective help to address these.

Leaders have identified the needs of pupils with SEND effectively. New plans have been developed so that teachers know what pupils need to help them succeed. Teachers use these plans to make sure that learning is carefully considered and well matched.

Reading is a priority that starts in early years. Younger pupils benefit from daily teaching of reading. They have good opportunities to apply their phonic knowledge. This helps most pupils to read and spell accurately. All staff have been trained in the new phonics programme. However, there are a few inconsistencies in the teaching of phonics. Not all staff identify precisely enough gaps in phonic knowledge. As a result, a few pupils are not keeping up with the phonics programme. However, staff do check that pupils read books every day that helps them practise the sounds they already know.

Teachers read to pupils daily. This encourages pupils to want to read for themselves. Pupils appreciate the books teachers choose for story time. Older pupils had a shared understanding of stories and their favourite characters. Leaders make sure the whole school celebrates reading through special events such as World Book Day. Pupils benefit from author visits and the opportunity to explore a range of books.

Pupils behave well. Older pupils talked confidently about reasons for any occasional poor behaviour. They said if it happens, it usually means that a pupil needs some support. All pupils were confident in the adults who support them and the 'tools' they can use such as the worry box and board that reflects their emotions.

Leaders provide a curriculum that supports pupils' broader development. Pupils can explain how their age-appropriate knowledge develops every year. They understand and can talk about diversity. Pupils know that physical education and after-school sports clubs help them to be physically fit. Older pupils understand that making good food choices at lunchtime also helps them to be healthy.

Leaders are considerate of staff's workload and well-being. They value the many opportunities they have for their own learning. They know the headteacher is open to new ideas to support staff's workload. Governors are also aware of and mindful of staff's well-being and the support offered for their professional development.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Pupils' safety, welfare and well-being are a priority. All staff are regularly trained in how to help pupils keep safe. Where concerns are identified, leaders act swiftly to ensure pupils are safe. They have developed strong relationships with safeguarding professionals to

make sure that pupils are kept safe and families get the help and support they need. Leaders have developed robust systems for recruitment. However, at times, governance oversight of some aspects of safeguarding has not been sufficiently robust.

The curriculum, assemblies and information for parents all help pupils to have a secure understanding of e-safety and how to keep themselves safe.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- There are a few inconsistencies in the teaching of phonics, meaning not all staff identify and address gaps in pupils' learning well enough. As a result, some pupils are not keeping up with the school's phonics programme. Leaders should provide further training for staff so they can precisely identify gaps in pupils' phonic knowledge and take swift action to close these gaps.
- In a few foundation subjects, leaders have not yet identified clearly enough the essential knowledge they would like pupils to learn and remember. As a result, sometimes pupils find it difficult to reconnect with what they already know and build securely on this. Leaders need to identify the most important knowledge and skills they would like pupils to learn.

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 January 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	123063
Local authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	10241930
Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	102
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Mehul Pancholi
Headteacher	Lisa Moorhouse
Website	www.dry-sandford.oxon.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	18 July 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The current chair of governors was appointed in September 2022.
- 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. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspectors held meetings with the headteacher and staff. The lead inspector met with two governors, including the chair of governors, and held a meeting with a representative from the local authority.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to pupils about their learning, listened to pupils read and looked at some samples of pupils' work. They also spoke to leaders about the curriculum in other subjects.

- The inspectors observed pupils' behaviour around the school during lessons, in assembly and at lunch- and breaktimes. The inspectors also met with groups of pupils to hear their views.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors spoke with staff and pupils and considered a wide range of records and documents. The lead inspector met with the designated safeguarding lead to discuss the school's safeguarding arrangements and consider information about the recruitment of staff.
- Inspectors considered pupils' and staff's views through meeting with them.
- Inspectors took account of parents' views through the responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, and through parents' free-text comments.

Inspection team

Charlotte Wilson, lead inspector Ofsted Inspector

Matthew Rixson Ofsted Inspector

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