School report

Inspection of Spurcroft Primary School

Spurcroft Road, Thatcham, Berkshire RG19 3XX

Inspection dates: 8 and 9 November 2022

Overall effectiveness	**Good**
The quality of education	**Good**
Behaviour and attitudes	**Good**
Personal development	**Good**
Leadership and management	**Good**
Early years provision	**Good**
Previous inspection grade	Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils appreciate how teachers support them in the classroom and beyond to be well prepared for their lives in the future. Staff help pupils to understand and demonstrate the values of kindness, teamwork, responsibility, creative thinking, ambition and self-belief. As one pupil commented, 'Believing in ourselves is the greatest thing we can learn.'

Staff are determined for all to achieve well. Pupils respond positively to this high ambition and enjoy learning. They appreciate how staff recap important knowledge, and they talk with enthusiasm about what they have learned in different subjects.

Pupils behave well overall. Most staff are swift to guide pupils who need reminding of how they are expected to behave. Leaders provide considerable support for a minority of pupils to help them to make the right choices. Pupils say that bullying does not happen often. Leaders take effective action to address incidents of unkind behaviour. This helps pupils to feel safe.

Leaders ensure that pupils benefit from a variety of opportunities. This includes leadership roles, such being a science ambassador. Older pupils act as well-being champions and lead assemblies on topics including how to recognise and manage different feelings. Pupils enjoy masterclasses, when they work with pupils from different schools.

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

Staff help children to get off to a positive start in early years. They prioritise developing children's communication skills. All staff skilfully model accurate language and use effective questioning to develop children's understanding. From the start of Nursery, children are supported effectively to recognise different sounds. This prepares them well for learning to read as they move into Reception. Staff sharply focus on expanding children's vocabulary, including by routinely reading stories aloud.

The teaching of reading is effective. Leaders have introduced a new phonics programme and ensured that all staff are highly trained. Staff value the ongoing, precise feedback from leaders to develop their teaching. Pupils read books that are closely matched to the sounds they have learned. This helps them to develop fluency and confidence. Staff give weaker readers carefully planned extra support, and this helps these pupils to quickly catch up. Leaders provide useful guidance for parents and carers to help them to read with their child at home.

Leaders have strengthened the curriculum thinking in all other subjects. They have identified and sequenced the key content that they intend pupils to learn. Pupils complete work that supports them to learn the most important knowledge across most of the curriculum. In a few subjects, such as history and geography, staff are using new planning for the first time. The work that pupils complete does not

consistently reinforce the key learning in these subjects. This means that pupils' learning in these subjects is variable. Leaders have identified that this needs further refinement.

Teachers have secure subject knowledge and start lessons by recapping key learning from previous sessions. This helps pupils to recall the essential knowledge and to make connections with new learning. Staff check carefully what pupils have understood and use this information to inform their teaching and address misconceptions. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are identified swiftly and are usually well supported. Staff adapt their teaching by providing different resources and adult support to help pupils with SEND to learn the same curriculum. The new special educational needs coordinator is prioritising working with parents to strengthen relationships and refine support for pupils with SEND.

Pupils demonstrate highly positive attitudes to learning. Most pupils listen carefully and focus well in lessons. They play kindly together at playtimes. Leaders provide substantial support for a few pupils to help them behave well. This work is effective, but some staff agreed that they would welcome further support from leaders in relation to behaviour.

Leaders promote pupils' personal development well. Staff help pupils to learn about healthy lifestyles. For example, pupils in Year 3 study nutrition and food choices. They build on this in Year 6, when they learn about different lifestyles, including the potential impact of drugs. Pupils are helped to develop a strong sense of diversity and inclusion. They talk confidently about the importance of equality, and they appreciate that some people might need different help. Staff teach pupils to be kind and to include others.

Governors have a clear understanding of their roles. They have refined their work to focus more sharply on the curriculum and how well pupils are learning. Governors provide strong challenge to leaders, including about the number of suspensions. They recognise that this scrutiny needs to continue.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure that all staff are well trained and are alert to any sign that a child may be at risk of harm. Staff understand the risks to pupils in the local community. They report concerns promptly, and leaders take vigilant action to ensure that pupils and families get the timely help that they need. Record-keeping is detailed.

Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe when online. This includes learning not to give out personal details to anyone they do not know. Younger children learn how to manage risks, such as safety considerations when using sparklers.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a few subjects, where the curriculum is being taught for the first time, tasks do not consistently reinforce the key knowledge that leaders want pupils to learn. This means that learning in these subjects is variable. Leaders should ensure that the work that pupils complete helps them to build knowledge gradually over time.
- Some staff agreed that they would welcome more support from leaders to manage pupils' behaviour. A few staff do not manage pupils' behaviour consistently well. Leaders should ensure that the school's approach to behaviour management is clearly understood by all pupils, staff and parents, and make sure that leadership support is provided as required.

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	109937
Local authority	West Berkshire
Inspection number	10240292
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	425
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Sara Dutfield
Headteacher	Kate Flowerdew
Website	www.spurcroft.w-berks.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	5 and 6 October 2021, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Several staff have joined the school since the previous inspection.
- The school has a Nursery for three- and four-year-old children.
- The governing body manages before- and after-school childcare provision.
- The school uses one provider of registered alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the second routine inspection the school had received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspectors met with the headteacher and other school staff.

- The lead inspector also met with members of the governing body, including the chair, and spoke to a representative from the local authority.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics, religious education and geography. For each deep dive, 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.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors spoke with staff and pupils. The lead inspector met with the designated safeguarding lead to review their knowledge, records and actions. The inspectors also looked at safeguarding records and actions and reviewed information about the safer recruitment of staff.
- To make wider judgements, inspectors spoke to staff and groups of pupils from different year groups and observed behaviour in classrooms and at lunchtime.
- The views of staff and pupils, including responses to Ofsted's online staff survey, were considered.
- Responses to Ofsted Parent View, including written comments, were also taken into account.

Inspection team

Laurie Anderson, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Jo Brinkley	His Majesty's Inspector
Cathy Davies	Ofsted Inspector

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