

Inspection of Brill Church of England School

The Firs, Brill, Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire HP18 9RY

Inspection dates: 19 and 20 April 2023

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

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils thrive at this nurturing village school. The school's motto is 'with the wind in our sails', and this positive approach inspires the whole school community. There is an overwhelmingly positive and inclusive school culture. Pupils are taught to be respectful and responsible in thoughtful ways. Staff are constantly seeking to develop excellence throughout all of their work, helping all pupils to achieve well by the end of key stage 2. Pupils feel a strong sense of belonging and are proud of their school. One pupil said, 'If I could describe the school in one word, I would say 'friend' because everyone is like one big friend really.'

Pupils know the school's values of hope, honesty, courage and compassion. They understand what these values mean and how they are celebrated in lessons, playtimes, assemblies and through the school's caring approach. Pupils have excellent attitudes about their learning. They speak with confidence about the way they support each other through groups such as the 'Eco Council' which helps to compost food waste from lunchtimes. One pupil said, 'It helps us to be responsible and get ready for Year 7.' Pupils say that love is the root value of the school, and this is echoed by staff through their warm, professional approaches towards each other.

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

Leaders are ambitious for all pupils. The headteacher has an ambitious vision and high expectations. Leaders show a relentless determination for all pupils. They work closely in partnership with other schools to develop teachers' curriculum expertise. Subjects such as mathematics, geography and physical education (PE) enable pupils to achieve well, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Staff check pupils' understanding by using the school's 'What I will learn' documents to help them ensure pupils make progress through the curriculum. In some subjects, such as geography, curriculum thinking is well developed, and lessons fully reflect leaders' high expectations. In a small number of subjects, this work is still in the process of being put into practice. This means that not all pupils are consistently achieving as well as they could.

Pupils learn to read well. Early reading and phonics teaching are strengths of the school. Leaders have thoughtful, systematic approaches and support all pupils in developing their knowledge and understanding. By checking pupils' learning in detailed ways, staff successfully adapt lessons to develop pupils' phonics skills. This begins from the start of children's time at school in Reception. Across the curriculum, leaders are passionate about choosing inspirational texts to be the focus of learning. One member of staff said that they 'make every moment count to make every child a confident reader'.

Pupils with SEND achieve well. The special educational needs coordinator has a deep understanding of the range of barriers to learning that exist for some pupils at the school. Staff work with external agencies where needed, including offering specialist workshops for staff and parents, for example a well-attended workshop on helping

to manage challenging behaviour. In the early years, some of the curriculum thinking is still being developed to ensure that provision is effective for all pupils. Leaders know this and are already taking the steps that they need for this to improve.

The school's values are clear and understood by all. The behaviour policy helps pupils to make positive choices and have a positive impact on each other. Character is developed through consistent, focused work on the 'Brill' child, which is at the heart of the school's vision for success. Residential trips, such as the Year 6 visit to France, help pupils to develop independence, as does the school's effective approach to teaching modern foreign languages. Leaders deal swiftly with any behaviour incidents. Through consistently high expectations, staff maintain a positive, calm and purposeful environment. Staff teach behaviour through the curriculum. They apply the behaviour policy consistently and pay close attention to individual pupils' needs. This results in no use of suspensions, no permanent exclusions and a positive, fully inclusive school.

Governors offer exceptional support to the school. They know the school's strengths and areas for development in detail. They demonstrate insight and wisdom in relation to school improvement and staff's workload and well-being. They have clear support systems in place and strive to challenge themselves in the pursuit of excellence. Governors are highly skilled and recognise the strength of the headteacher and leaders at the school. Parents, pupils and staff are also very positive about the school. One parent said: 'I feel very special teachers with such positive energy and genuine enthusiasm have made a big and memorable impact on my children. Passion runs through all staff, from the head to teachers and all the support staff, which is incredible to see.'

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff are well trained in safeguarding and have very strong relationships with their children and families. This helps staff to be alert to any changes that may indicate a child is at risk of harm. 'Worry boxes' and high levels of pastoral support help pupils to share any concerns they have with adults. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe, including online. Record-keeping shows that leaders take swift action to get pupils timely help, including making referrals to external agencies where needed. Governors complete safeguarding training so they have the knowledge they need to check the effectiveness of safeguarding, including safer recruitment practices.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some aspects of the wider curriculum are not yet consistently implemented. This means that some pupils do not consistently learn key knowledge as well as they could. Leaders should continue to monitor, support and train all staff so that all

pupils can learn securely in all subjects.

- The new early years curriculum is not yet implemented as effectively as it could be. This means that not all pupils build their knowledge and skills as well as they could. Leaders should ensure that the early years curriculum provides deliberate opportunities for children to develop detailed knowledge and skills across the seven areas of learning, enabling all pupils to thrive and be ready for their next stage of education.

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	139446
Local authority	Buckinghamshire
Inspection number	10227474
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	189
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Jayne Gibson-Harris
Headteacher	Louise White
Website	www.brill.bucks.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	30 April 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is a Church of England voluntary controlled primary academy in the Diocese of Oxford.
- The school's most recent Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools was on 12 October 2017.
- The school does not currently use alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

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

- 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.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, groups of staff and representatives of the governing body and diocese.
- Deep dives were completed in early reading, mathematics, PE and geography. For

each deep dive, an inspector met with subject leaders, discussed the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers and pupils and looked at samples of pupils' work where available.

- Inspectors spoke with pupils about their experiences in school and observed their behaviour around the school. An inspector also met with pupils to talk about the wider curriculum and their learning.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of the safeguarding arrangements in the school, inspectors spoke to members of staff and pupils to evaluate the school's safeguarding culture. An inspector met with the designated safeguarding lead to discuss the school's policies and procedures. During this meeting, records were scrutinised, including those relating to the safer recruitment of staff. Case files were sampled to explore how the school identifies and supports pupils at risk of harm.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses. Inspectors also spoke to parents at the school gate.
- Inspectors considered the feedback provided through the staff survey.

Inspection team

Carl McCarthy, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Rachel Roberts

Ofsted Inspector

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