

Inspection of Saxton Church of England Primary School

Dam Lane, Saxton, Tadcaster, North Yorkshire LS24 9QF

Inspection dates: 15 and 16 September 2022

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
The quality of education	Requires improvement
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Requires improvement
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

What is it like to attend this school?

Leaders have a vision for their school that everyone shares. Pupils use their Christian vision, 'Good people, doing well', to describe the distinctiveness of their school.

This school is federated with another primary school. The executive headteacher has strengthened the way the schools work together to expand opportunities for pupils and staff.

Pupils know the school's behaviour rules. Behaviour at playtime has improved. Sports coaches and Year 6 sports leaders organise activities that promote cooperative play.

Pupils know what bullying is and use the STOP acronym ('several times on purpose' and 'start telling other people') to articulate it. Pupils are clear that if bullying happens, teachers will sort it out.

There are many leadership opportunities for pupils. The Year 3 and Year 4 pupils participate in a national young leader programme. These pupils chose to enhance the local woodland area by cleaning it up, digging it over and planting wildflowers. They show commitment to improving the environment.

Leaders have begun developing their curriculum from early years through to Year 6. However, it is not sufficiently refined to ensure that pupils are building on what they already know. In the early years, children access activities without a clear intent for their learning.

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

The school bases its curriculum on a structure developed by curriculum leaders across the trust. Leaders have tailored the curriculum to the needs of the pupils at Saxton Primary School. Leaders rightly prioritised developing the reading and mathematics curriculums. Leaders know that some wider curriculum areas need further refinement, from the early years onwards. There are inconsistencies in how teachers plan the small steps of learning for pupils. For example, sometimes pupils receive too much information in a lesson or are taught something that does not link with what they have learned before.

The special educational needs and disabilities coordinator (SENDCo) ensures that curriculum plans include modifications to enable pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to access the full curriculum. For example, these may include the use of voice-to-text recognition. This allows pupils who find writing difficult to share their ideas. The SENDCo has delivered training to make sure that all teachers are skilled in identifying pupils who may have an additional need.

Assessment is not being used consistently across the school. Staff sometimes miss opportunities to correct misconceptions or incorrect number and letter formation. With the support of the trust, school leaders are developing systems for assessment across the curriculum as a next step.

As the school is a smaller-than-average primary school, teachers are educating pupils from different year groups in one class. In some lessons, teachers do not make sure that pupils in each year group have a curriculum that is ambitious and matched to their needs. Sometimes, the work pupils are given does not match the ambition planned by leaders. This means that some pupils are not making the progress that they might. There is inconsistency in how the early years curriculum is delivered. Staff are not clear on the intended learning for the areas of provision or how they plan to build on this learning over time.

Leaders want reading to be the 'building block' for all learning. Teachers assess pupils' phonics knowledge every half term. This assessment provides the class teacher with accurate knowledge on what sounds pupils know and if they can blend sounds together to read words. Staff skilfully encourage and support pupils to sound out and blend together new words. Pupils in the early years and key stage 1 have extra phonics sessions to help them catch up if they are struggling to remember their sounds.

The school's curriculum enables pupils to develop their character. For example, pupils in Years 5 and 6 foster resilience, courage and determination through an adventure residential visit. There is a whole-school approach to teaching about relationships, sex and health education. Pupils feel that they are treated equally and with respect.

Leaders focus on ensuring that pupils behave well consistently and have positive attitudes to their learning. Pupils in key stage 2 correctly model these. However, some younger pupils in key stage 1 and the early years disrupt the flow of learning by talking to each other or fidgeting with resources. Routines are not well established for these pupils.

Leaders have had many historical weaknesses to address. They are systematically tackling each one. The trust, the diocese and the local governing body have a realistic perspective of the strengths of the school. They all recognise there are inconsistencies within the curriculum and have a school plan to develop it. The governors are well-informed. They challenge and support leaders to continue to improve the school. They recognise the impact of COVID-19 and staff absence on the pace of improvement.

Staff embrace the changes that leaders have put in place. They are overwhelmingly positive about being part of a federation. Some subject leaders lead their curriculum area across the federation to share expertise. This has an impact on reducing teacher workload.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff and governors have annual safeguarding training and regular updates. This ensures that they are aware of the indicators of harm and risks to pupils.

Leaders have identified specific dangers that their pupils face in the rural community, for example crossing country roads and playing outside without street lighting. As a result, leaders include road safety sessions in the curriculum. They

appoint junior road safety officers to help to ensure that pupils know how to stay safe.

Leaders have mechanisms for recording and analysing patterns of behaviour and safeguarding concerns. This means they take swift, effective action when identifying a trend. Pupils can disclose their concerns or worries to a trusted adult.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects in the wider curriculum, leaders have not planned out the small steps of content pupils need to learn. Teachers are not clear on the end points the sequences of learning are building to. They do not break the content down into small enough steps for pupils to be successful. This means that in some subjects, pupils cannot remember some of the key knowledge they have been taught. Leaders should ensure that sequences of learning in each subject are clear and build towards clearly defined outcomes.
- Teachers sometimes give work to pupils in the mixed-age class that does not match the intended aims of the curriculum. It sometimes does not build on what pupils have been taught in the past. As a result, pupils do not consistently have work that is matched to what they need to learn next. Leaders should ensure that all teachers plan activities that build on prior knowledge and are ambitious for all.
- Teachers do not use assessment consistently well. On some occasions, teachers miss where pupils have misconceptions. Pupils continue to make the same errors. Teachers should ensure that they assess what pupils can do and what they have remembered so that the work given to them corrects these misconceptions promptly and effectively.
- The curriculum in the early years lacks some coherence with the curriculum in the rest of the school. Staff in the early years are not sufficiently skilled in designing activities that match the curricular goals set out in this curriculum. Children are not taught important skills such as letter formation or taking turns quickly or systematically enough. Leaders should ensure that the curriculum in the early years prepares children for their learning in Year 1 and beyond.

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	145846
Local authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	10241401
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	59
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Clare Thornton-Eckford
Headteacher	Rick Weights
Website	www.sp.starmat.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Saxton Church of England Primary School became an academy in May 2018. It joined the Sherburn, Tadcaster and Rural (STAR) Multi-Academy Trust. When its predecessor school, of the same name, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be inadequate overall.
- The school is federated with Monk Fryston Church of England Primary School. The federation shares an executive headteacher and a local governing body.
- As the school is designated as having a religious character, it is inspected under section 48 of the Education Act 2005. The last section 48 inspection of the school was in June 2015. The timescales for reinspection have been extended because of COVID-19.
- This is a smaller-than-average primary school.
- There is a lower than national percentage of pupils with SEND, pupils who speak English as an additional language and pupils who receive pupil premium funding.
- The school does not use any alternative providers.

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 executive headteacher, curriculum leaders, staff and pupils. Meetings were also held with a representative of the trust, the local governing body and the diocese.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, history and religious education. For each deep dive, inspectors met with curriculum leaders, spoke to pupils and teachers, visited lessons and looked at pupils' work. Inspectors heard pupils read.
- Inspectors examined safeguarding records, attendance figures, curriculum plans and policies.
- Inspectors considered the views of parents from the responses to Ofsted's survey, Ofsted Parent View.
- The views of staff were considered from meeting with them and from the responses to Ofsted's staff questionnaire.
- The views of pupils were considered from meetings with them.

Inspection team

Alison Stephenson, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Matthew Knox	His Majesty's Inspector

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