

# Inspection of a good school: Robert Arkenstall Primary School

Camping Close, High Street, Haddenham, Ely, Cambridgeshire CB6 3UA

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Inspection dates:

18 and 19 May 2022

## **Outcome**

Robert Arkenstall Primary School continues to be a good school.

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Robert Arkenstall Primary School is a friendly and welcoming place in which to learn. Pupils are polite and courteous. They behave well in lessons and during less structured times. Pupils play kindly and learn well together, willingly helping each other when they find things tricky.

Pupils know that staff have high expectations of their learning. Pupils concentrate on their work and want to do their best. They enjoy debating ideas, including philosophical questions such as 'What is wisdom?' They are confident about sharing their ideas with their peers.

Pupils are excited and interested in the broad range of activities that they can take part in. They enjoy singing, as well as sports such as athletics and football. Pupils relish the opportunities provided to take up positions of responsibility, such as being road ambassadors.

Pupils say that they do not have concerns about bullying. They are confident that should there be an incident, adults will 'sort it out'. Pupils feel safe and are safe. Parents and carers agree. All parents who responded to the Ofsted Parent View questionnaire agreed that their child feels happy and safe.

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

Leaders have designed an ambitious curriculum. They have carefully thought about the important knowledge that they want pupils to learn by the end of Year 6, so pupils are ready for secondary school. Leaders have a clear rationale about the order in which staff teach the information pupils need. This helps pupils to build their understanding over time across a range of subjects.

The teaching of reading is a high priority for the school. This starts in the early years, with children learning phonics as soon as they begin in Reception. There is an effective phonics

programme in place. Teachers carefully choose reading books to help pupils to practise the sounds that they are learning and become accurate and confident readers. Staff are well trained in teaching pupils to read. Pupils who need to catch up are helped through the effective use of extra reading sessions. This includes pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

Staff promote a love of reading, including reading for pleasure. Older pupils read with increased breadth and fluency. Staff regularly read stories with pupils. This helps pupils to develop their vocabulary and comprehension skills.

Teachers have detailed subject knowledge. In subjects such as mathematics, pupils have the opportunity to practise and further develop their learning. In other subjects, such as geography and history, there is a new curriculum that leaders have implemented. It is starting to reap rewards, and pupils are beginning to use subject-specific vocabulary. Leaders know that there is more work to do to ensure that pupils learn and make the best progress they can across all subjects.

The provision for pupils with SEND is a strength. Pupils with SEND are well supported. Sometimes, for a period of time, pupils with SEND receive an individualised curriculum that is different to that of their peers. This meets their specific needs and helps pupils with SEND receive support they require to then access the same ambitious curriculum as all other pupils. Other pupils with SEND may receive extra adult support in class or have the work adapted for them if it is more appropriate. The impact of additional provision is closely monitored by the special educational needs coordinator (SENCo). The SENCo works well with outside agencies to secure helpful specialist support for pupils and their families.

Pupils behave well because staff have clear routines in class and around school. Staff lead by example and model the types of behaviour they expect from pupils. This creates a calm and orderly environment where pupils are comfortable listening to others and sharing their own views.

Staff arrange activities to enrich the curriculum and support pupils' wider development. Leaders organise different visitors from the locality to speak about different jobs and careers. Leaders also promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Pupils learn about different religions and customs. They enjoy taking part in events such as a dance workshop linked to pupils' study of Hinduism.

Leaders and governors help staff to manage their workload. Staff said that their well-being is well considered.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have clear systems in place to identify any pupil who may be at risk of harm. Staff are well trained and know how to respond to safeguarding concerns.

Leaders are vigilant and quick to follow up any concerns. They work closely with families and a range of expert services to provide suitable support for vulnerable pupils.

The school's curriculum provides opportunities for pupils to learn how to keep themselves safe. Pupils know whom to speak with if they have any worries or concerns.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- Leaders have recently introduced a new curriculum for the teaching of a few curriculum areas. Teachers are in the early stages of teaching this curriculum. The impact of this work on improving pupils' knowledge and understanding is not yet proven. Leaders need to check that teachers are delivering the curriculum well and that pupils are making good progress throughout the curriculum.

## **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 a section 8 inspection of a good or outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the section 8 inspection as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the second section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in November 2012.

## **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.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	110635
<b>Local authority</b>	Cambridgeshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10211327
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	273
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Sam Smith
<b>Headteacher</b>	Kate Bonney
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.robertarkenstall.co.uk">www.robertarkenstall.co.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	1 February 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- Robert Arkenstall Primary School has ten classes, eight of which are taught in mixed year groups.
- Leaders do 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 inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector held meetings with senior leaders, subject leaders, other members of staff and members of the governing body. The inspector spoke with a representative from the local authority.
- Deep dives were carried out in reading, mathematics, geography and history. For each deep dive, the inspector met with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to some pupils about their learning, looked at samples of pupils' work, and spoke to some teachers. The inspector listened to pupils reading to a familiar adult.

- The inspector evaluated a range of documents to consider the safeguarding arrangements. Meetings were held with leaders and staff. The school's record of staff recruitment was scrutinised.
- The inspector analysed 99 responses to the pupil questionnaire. The inspector spoke with and observed pupils at different times in the school day, including at lunchtime.
- The inspector considered 39 responses and 23 free-text responses to Ofsted's questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View. The inspector also spoke to several parents at the start of a school day.
- The inspector considered the 38 responses to the staff questionnaire and spoke to several members of staff during the inspection.

### **Inspection team**

James Adkins, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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