

Inspection of Richard Hill Church of England Primary School

12 Anstey Lane, Thurcaston, Leicester, Leicestershire LE7 7JA

Inspection dates:	20 and 21 May 2025
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement

The headteacher of this school is Sally Applebee. This school is part of Learn Academies Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Jane Jones, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Jeremy Benson.

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a happy school where pupils are enthusiastic about their learning. Behaviour in the school is calm and orderly. Pupils feel safe and well supported. The school takes great care to include all pupils in everything that it does. This includes pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

Effective leadership provides a clear sense of direction. The school has high expectations for all pupils' achievement. Pupils are attentive and enthusiastic learners, achieving well across the curriculum. They enjoy relevant and interesting learning activities. The school enriches the curriculum to make learning exciting. Recent experiences have included a backstage theatre tour. Pupils have also explored the 'Thurcaston hoard' of Islamic coins. This has included working with historians and artists.

Pupils' enjoyment is evident in the core and wider curriculum. In maths, pupils like the challenge of finding efficient methods. In art, one pupil commented, 'I love the freedom!'

Parents and carers hold the school in high regard. They praise both the standard of teaching and the quality of pastoral care. As a parent, typical of many, explained: 'Teachers care deeply about the children at the school. There is a strong emphasis on values and developing the whole person.'

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

The school provides a broad, well-structured curriculum. This aims to ensure that pupils develop secure knowledge and skills across subjects. The school has shown commitment to the ongoing refinement of its curriculum. In this work, the school has collaborated with the trust. Since the last inspection, the school has made many curriculum changes. The progression of skills and knowledge in each subject is now set out in clear detail. New programmes of study have been in place for two years. Leaders have ensured that there is a more consistent approach to the implementation of the curriculum. This is leading to pupils achieving expected standards in the most recent published outcomes at the end of key stage 2.

The approach to reading is a clear strength of the school. Staff have received specialist training. This has strengthened their confidence and expertise in delivering the phonics programme. Pupils who need extra support receive targeted teaching to help them keep up. As a result, pupils develop confidence and fluency in reading. This enables them to access the wider curriculum with success. Pupils' love of reading continues as they progress through the school. As one older pupil enthused, 'When I read a book without pictures, I can still see it!'

Children in the early years get off to a positive start in their learning. They engage well with activities, working and playing together. Staff are attentive to children's individual needs. They provide clear guidance to help children learn and practise new knowledge. This is particularly evident in early reading and writing. From the early years to Year 6, the school places equal value on all subjects and ensures pupils receive a broad and

balanced education. Lessons are well structured, and pupils are eager to share their ideas. They respond positively to their teachers and work hard.

Beginning in early years, the school is quick to identify the needs of pupils with SEND. Teachers make appropriate adjustments to teaching. This enables all pupils to access the full curriculum. The school believes in placing 'no ceiling' on pupils' learning. In classrooms, staff put this belief into action.

The school provides a well-designed personal development programme. Pupils have opportunities to broaden their horizons through a range of learning experiences. Special visitors encourage pupils to raise their aspirations and aim high in life. They provide pupils with insights into a wide range of careers. Pupils relish opportunities to hold positions of responsibility. These range from play leaders to members of the pupil communication group. Pupils play an important role in making links with other schools at home and abroad. These connections help pupils understand and appreciate children from different backgrounds. Pupils show high levels of respect for others. They talk with understanding about fundamental British values, such as individual liberty.

The school is proactive in reducing pupils' absence. The school tracks attendance, intervening where needed. Attendance has improved and is now in line with the national average.

Governors and trust officers have a full picture of what is happening and a clear vision for the future of the school. The trust has played an important role in supporting school improvement.

Leaders consider staff workload and well-being when making decisions. Morale is high and staff are proud to work at this school. As one staff member commented, 'I have never felt as well supported in a job as I do in this school.'

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Since the last inspection, changes have been made to improve the curriculum. The impact of these changes has not been fully realised. The school, supported by the trust, should continue embedding the curriculum to ensure all pupils achieve the highest standards of which they are capable.

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](#)' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	145972
Local authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	10347675
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	101
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Jeremy Benson
CEO of the trust	Jane Jones
Headteacher	Sally Applebee
Website	www.richardhillschool.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	2 and 3 November 2022, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school joined Learn Academy Trust in February 2024.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.
- The school is part of the Diocese of Leicester. The most recent section 48 inspection of this Church of England school, which is an inspection of the school's religious character, took place in November 2023.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth form provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024, will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school's education provision.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: mathematics, early reading, and art and design. For each subject, they 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. Inspectors also considered the school's work in other subjects.
- During the inspection, inspectors met with the headteacher, the senior leadership team and representatives from the Trust. The lead inspector also met with governors and trustees.
- Inspector considered the support provided for pupils with SEND.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and at lunchtime. They also discussed pupils' behaviour and attendance with leaders.
- Inspectors considered the views of parents who responded to Ofsted's survey, Parent View. They also spoke with some parents at the school gates.
- Inspectors considered a wide range of evidence, including attendance records and minutes of governing body and trustee meetings.
- Throughout the inspection, the inspectors met with groups of staff. They also considered the opinions expressed through the online staff survey.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interest first.

Inspection team

Martyn Skinner, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Becky Lyon

Ofsted Inspector

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