

# The Vine Christian School

Independent school standard inspection report

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DfE registration number	872/6013
Unique Reference Number (URN)	134424
Inspection number	361415
Inspection dates	29–30 November 2010
Reporting inspector	Philip Mann

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## **Purpose and scope of the inspection**

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Section 162A of the Education Act 2002, as amended by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.<sup>1, 2</sup>

## **Information about the school**

The Vine Christian School was established in 2003 and is an integral part of the Three Mile Cross Church centre on the outskirts of Reading, in Berkshire. The school caters for pupils between the ages of five and 18 years of age, with a total of 16 full-time pupils currently on roll. There are no pupils with a statement of special educational needs. The school aims to realise its Christian vision, 'That we may present every person as a mature Christian disciple.' The PACEs, pupils' individual work books, 'are carefully designed to give the student harmonious academic training from God's point of view'. Parents are expected to contribute time regularly towards the running of the school. The school is managed by a proprietorial body of trustees, all of whom are closely connected with the running of the church. The school was last inspected in November 2007.

## **Evaluation of the school**

The school meets its aims and the quality of education provided is good. There have been a number of improvements since the last inspection. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and their behaviour are outstanding. The curriculum provides a Christian background for all who work in the school. The good quality of teaching enables pupils to make good progress. Pupils enjoy school and they are courteous and respectful. Safeguarding systems are satisfactory and the school meets most of the regulations for independent schools.

## **Quality of education**

The overall quality of education is good. The quality of the curriculum is satisfactory. Morning sessions are devoted to the ACE curriculum where pupils gain in knowledge and understanding by completing PACEs. These provide a broad curriculum including English, creative writing, word building, mathematics, science, social studies and Bible work. There are two classes within the school: juniors and seniors. The younger juniors begin with the ABC curriculum which is the ACE and an early years programme. Juniors and seniors proceed with their PACEs and the older pupils may progress to take the International Certificate of Christian Education, an alternative to GCSE and A-level examinations. The PACE system is rigorous, as pupils mark their own work and it is overseen in class by monitors who ensure marking is accurate

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<sup>1</sup> [www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts2002/ukpga\\_20020032\\_en\\_14#pt10-ch1-pb4-l1g162](http://www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts2002/ukpga_20020032_en_14#pt10-ch1-pb4-l1g162)

<sup>2</sup> [www.opsi.gov.uk/ACTS/acts2005/ukpga\\_20050018\\_en\\_15#sch8](http://www.opsi.gov.uk/ACTS/acts2005/ukpga_20050018_en_15#sch8)

and that progress is balanced across different subjects. Pupils develop a degree of responsibility towards their own learning by setting their individual goals and becoming aware of their rate of progress through their PACEs.

The school has addressed the lack of practical activities during morning sessions by providing an afternoon curriculum where the emphasis is on a more practical approach to learning. This additional material includes science, history, geography, French, art, design and technology, information and communication technology (ICT) and physical education (PE). This supplementary material is planned over a 12-year period and helps to provide a more balanced curriculum. Teachers plan these afternoon lessons from detailed schemes of work but these do not fully ensure sufficient progression in the work and activities suggested. Wherever possible, use is made of parental or local expertise, for example with regular practical mathematics sessions for junior pupils, junior cooking and computer activities and technology projects for the seniors. Recently, a visiting dietician gave a lesson on healthy eating and a visiting speaker gave older pupils a talk on sex education. The school now has a scheme of work for personal, social and health education (PSHE), where subjects such as drugs and physical development are considered but the PSHE sessions are not as regular as they might be. Some use is made of the Connexions service to support careers education and work experience is often provided through church contacts so pupils may gain an insight into the world of work.

The quality of teaching and assessment is good and pupils make good progress overall. The ACE curriculum materials enable all pupils to set their own rate of working. Pupil self-testing gives them an insight into how quickly they make progress. This testing requires pupils to fully understand the relevant subject content before moving on to their next PACE. Progress is particularly good in the ACE/morning curriculum. The PACE system enables pupils to check how well they are performing towards their chosen goals and any difficulties are quickly dealt with by the monitors who provide one-to-one support, enabling good progress to be maintained. Pupils have warm and constructive relationships with staff; there is an ethos of mutual respect and, during lessons, pupils apply themselves diligently. The 'learning centres', the rooms where pupils work, are well organised and pupils are familiar with the routines that enable lessons to run smoothly.

The afternoon curriculum provides a wide range of practical activities. In a design and technology session, a group of senior pupils were learning about joints and properties of wood as part of a bridge-building project. The junior class were enjoying making load-bearing beams from sheets of paper. In both lessons, progress was good, as teachers know their pupils well and are able to provide the appropriate challenge for individual pupils. Volunteer parents are used regularly and they help as monitors in the ACE programme. These parents receive appropriate training by the trustees to ensure the best possible learning experience is provided for the pupils. The assessment of some of the learning in the afternoon sessions is less well developed.

## **Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils**

The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils is outstanding. Relationships between pupils and all who work in the school are very positive and respectful and underpin the school's strong moral and Christian ethos. Daily prayers are an enjoyable routine for pupils and help to develop a sense of family spirituality from an early age. Pupils' attitudes to work are very good. Behaviour is outstanding and the pupils' social development is helped very well through the mixing of pupils of different ages in the same classroom. The curriculum provides good opportunities for developing pupils' cultural awareness in social studies, through links with other schools and because of the rich cultural mix within the school. Pupils learn about other faiths in their morning activities. Attendance is good and pupils say they very much enjoy coming to school. There are excellent opportunities to enable pupils to make a positive contribution to the school. For example, lunchtime arrangements are organised by the pupils and a weekly rota of responsibilities ensures that this runs smoothly. Pupils work hard preparing for a 'Summer Convention' in choosing an activity such as drama, photography or athletics to represent their school. Good links with the local community include the school taking part in a religious service at a local elderly people's home each month.

## **Welfare, health and safety of pupils**

The school's provision for the welfare, health and safety of pupils is satisfactory. Safeguarding systems are satisfactory overall. Pupils are well supervised. The child protection policy outlines the school's procedures for child protection and all the required staff training has been undertaken. All required policies and procedures are in place. The school has carried out fire risk assessments, trips outside school are risk assessed and pupils say they feel very safe in school. Pupils know about healthy lifestyles and there are clear expectations concerning the contents of lunch boxes. The school is implementing its three-year plan to fulfil its duties under the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, as amended.

## **Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors**

Since the previous inspection, the school has improved its appointment procedures and Criminal Record Bureau (CRB) checks are undertaken for all who work in the school. There is a single central register which records all the required checks, including those on the medical fitness of all staff.

## **Premises of and accommodation at the school**

The school and church share the same modern building and some of the same accommodation. The building is light, airy and spacious and is in excellent decorative order. A recent extension upstairs enables the older pupils to have their own learning centre. On the ground floor, there is a suitable area for cooking and a room for ABC pupils where one-to-one work may be carried out. There is a small external play area which is adequate for the present number of pupils. The sanctuary section of the church is used for physical activities and, in addition, pupils go to the local swimming

pool and sports centre for some of their PE lessons. There are some inadequate security arrangements.

### **Provision of information**

The school website contains up-to-date school details. A school brochure and admissions pack are also available which contain all the required information. Prospective parents are provided with helpful information about the school. Parents and carers receive two reports on their children's progress during the year.

### **Manner in which complaints are to be handled**

The school's complaints procedure fully complies with requirements.

### **Compliance with regulatory requirements**

The proprietor has ensured that the school meets The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010, schedule 1 (the Regulations), with the exception of those listed below.

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of the premises of and accommodation at schools (standards in part 5) and must:

- ensure security arrangements are in place for the grounds and building (paragraph 23(d)).

### **What the school could do to improve further**

While not required by regulations, the school might wish to consider the following points for development:

- provide pupils with more regular lessons in PSHE
- develop assessment systems for learning in the afternoon sessions.

## Inspection judgements

outstanding	good	satisfactory	inadequate
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### The quality of education

Overall quality of education		✓		
How well the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of pupils			✓	
How effective teaching and assessment are in meeting the full range of pupils' needs		✓		
How well pupils make progress in their learning		✓		

### Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

Quality of provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	✓			
The behaviour of pupils	✓			

### Welfare, health and safety of pupils

The overall welfare, health and safety of pupils			✓	
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## School details

<b>Name of school</b>	The Vine Christian School		
<b>DfE number</b>	872/6013		
<b>Unique reference number</b>	134424		
<b>School status</b>	Independent		
<b>Type of school</b>	Christian Day School		
<b>Date school opened</b>	September 2003		
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	5–18 years		
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed		
<b>Number on roll (full-time pupils)</b>	Boys: 9	Girls: 7	Total: 16
<b>Number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs</b>	Boys: 0	Girls: 0	Total: 0
<b>Number of pupils who are looked after</b>	Boys: 0	Girls: 0	Total: 0
<b>Annual fees (day pupils)</b>	£2,333		
<b>Address of school</b>	Three Mile Cross Church Centre Basingstoke Road Three Mile Cross Reading Berkshire RG71AT		
<b>Telephone number</b>	0118 988 6464		
<b>Email address</b>	thevinechristian@tiscali.co.uk		
<b>Headteacher</b>	Acting Headteacher Mrs Lynne Thompson		
<b>Proprietors</b>	Mr Neil Evans, Mrs Lynne Thompson, Mr Gregory Husband		
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Philip Mann		
<b>Date of inspection</b>	29–30 November 2010		