

# Inspection of St Nicholas At Wade Church of England Primary School

Down Barton Road, St Nicholas-At-Wade, Birchington, Kent CT7 0PY

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Inspection dates: 1–2 October 2019

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Good</b>
Personal development	<b>Good</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Early years provision	<b>Outstanding</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Outstanding

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

Pupils enjoy their lessons and get on well with staff. Pupils are confident and happy. They say that they value the school's clubs and trips. Pupils are enthusiastic about opportunities to learn a musical instrument in key stage 2 or join the school's orchestra.

Pupils behave well, treat staff with respect and follow the school's rules. Pupils listen to teachers and help each other when they get stuck. At social times, pupils act sensibly. They play sport together, play on the outdoor equipment, use the outdoor library or sit and talk. Bullying is not tolerated. When it does happen, staff act swiftly.

Pupils know that their safety is a top priority for staff. Pupils feel safe and know which staff to go to if they are worried. Staff provide expert help to those pupils who need it. Pupils are well cared for.

Teachers expect pupils to work hard. Pupils live up to these high expectations. Trips are an important part of the curriculum. For example, pupils go to art galleries, wildlife parks and on teambuilding trips. This helps pupils develop a wider view of the world.

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

Leaders ensure that pupils enjoy a rich and ambitious curriculum. Leaders have thought about when to teach knowledge so that pupils know and remember more over time. In almost all subjects, including English, mathematics and science, teachers plan lessons so that pupils build on what they have learned before. However, in personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education, leaders have not yet finalised where and when to teach knowledge across the year groups. This means that pupils do not develop their knowledge and understanding in this subject as well as they could.

Teachers choose resources thoughtfully. In each year group, pupils produce good-quality work and achieve well. Committed staff support pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), well. Staff ensure that they meet pupils' needs and help them to catch up when they fall behind. Recently, leaders introduced a new way of assessing pupils' progress. This means that pupils understand their own learning better. For example, pupils are beginning to correct their own mistakes. This has helped them to learn more over time.

Leaders have focused on encouraging pupils' love of reading. Pupils develop their knowledge of different types of books as they move through the school. In the early years, children improve their knowledge of phonics (letters and the sounds they represent) quickly. By the end of the Reception Year, children are very well prepared to join Year 1. In key stage 1, pupils continue to develop their reading skills effectively. They read with increasing fluency and understanding. During key stage

2, pupils develop their reading further. However, their class reading books are not always matched to their reading skills because they are not demanding enough.

Pupils have a good understanding of British values. For example, older pupils can explain how democracy works. The school's Christian ethos is woven through the curriculum. Pupils have a well-developed appreciation of right and wrong. They know about other religions, such as Hinduism and Islam, because of the carefully planned religious education (RE) curriculum.

In the early years, children thrive in a vibrant and colourful environment. They settle in to classroom routines quickly and behave extremely well. Leaders plan the curriculum expertly. Adults provide thought-provoking activities that encourage children's independence. Children are very well supported by staff. They carefully consider the development of each child. Consequently, children achieve very well by the end of the early years.

Leaders consider staff well-being when making decisions about school improvements. Staff told inspectors that they feel valued and that leaders support them well. Staff receive high-quality training. This helps them to develop their teaching.

Governors have a wide range of skills. Several governors are new to their roles. They have worked hard to ensure that they understand the school's strengths and weaknesses. However, they do not routinely ask challenging questions in their meetings with leaders. Governors attend school events and they have formed good relationships with staff, parents and carers. Almost all parents are very positive about the school and are beginning to play a wider role in school life. For example, leaders recently set up a 'parents' forum', where they encourage parents to discuss their views on a range of school issues.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have created a strong safeguarding culture. Staff ensure that they report concerns that they have about pupils to the designated safeguarding lead. Leaders carry out appropriate safeguarding checks on the suitability of staff to work in the school.

Staff make sure that pupils who need extra support are provided with it. When necessary, staff quickly refer pupils to external agencies.

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

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

- Pupils' learning in PSHE education is not sequenced as well as in other subjects. Consequently, PSHE education does not strengthen pupils' personal development as much as it could. Leaders should ensure that the curriculum is sequenced consistently well in all subjects.
- There have been several changes in the governing body over the past year. Several new governors have joined the governing body. Governors do not challenge leaders sufficiently well. Governors should improve this aspect of their work, for example through training, so that they can challenge leaders more effectively.

## 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 Ofsted Parent View information 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're 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>	118698
<b>Local authority</b>	Kent
<b>Inspection number</b>	10111446
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	5 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	205
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Local authority
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	James McAuley
<b>Headteacher</b>	Heather Kemp
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.st-nicholas-birchington.kent.sch.uk/">www.st-nicholas-birchington.kent.sch.uk/</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	26 March 2009

## Information about this school

- Since the previous inspection, there have been significant changes to leadership, staffing and governance. The current headteacher started in September 2013.
- The school is a member of the Diocese of Canterbury.

## Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We deemed the inspection a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, senior and subject leaders, two governors (including the chair of the governing body) and a representative from the local authority.
- On the first day of the inspection, inspectors focused their activities on reading, science, mathematics and RE. In each subject, inspectors met with subject leaders, talked to pupils, visited lessons (in subjects that were being taught during the inspection), spoke to teachers and looked at pupils' work.
- Inspectors considered the views of staff from meetings with groups of staff.

- Inspectors reviewed safeguarding records, including the central record of recruitment checks on staff.
- Inspectors considered the views of 104 parents who responded to the confidential Ofsted parental questionnaire, including 103 free-text responses.

### **Inspection team**

Harry Ingham, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Teresa Davies

Ofsted Inspector

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