

Inspection of Vernham Dean Gillum's Church of England Primary School

Vernham Dean, Andover, Hampshire SP11 0JY

Inspection dates: 15–16 October 2019

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Good

Early years provision

Good

Overall effectiveness at previous
inspection

Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy at this school. They feel safe and cared for. Pupils are respectful of each other and the adults. Pupils told us that bullying does not happen at this school because 'we learn to treat each other the way we want to be treated'. Pupils are sure that if they have any worries, there is always someone to help them.

Pupils learn important values, for example through whole-school themes such as 'Eco Week'. They enjoy the opportunities they have to try new things. Pupils find the range of after-school clubs on offer has something for all those who wish to join. They explained how taking part in many different educational visits helps them to learn.

Pupils behave well. They play together respectfully at breaktime and lunchtime. They behave well in class and when they walk around the school. Pupils enjoy attending school and, as a result, their attendance is good.

Leaders want the best for every child. Teachers expect pupils to work hard in lessons. However, pupils do not always achieve as well as they should. This is because the teaching pupils receive is not well planned, allowing gaps to develop in their knowledge in many subjects.

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

Since the last inspection, leaders have focused strongly on improving teaching and pupils' progress in writing and mathematics. As a result, pupils' learning in these subjects has improved. However, there is some way to go before the whole curriculum is as well constructed as it needs to be.

While there are suitable curriculum plans available in some subjects, for example physical education (PE) and music, others are not sequenced well enough. They do not take enough account of pupils' previous learning. As a result, subject leaders and teachers do not carefully consider how the knowledge and skills pupils learn in one lesson will help them in future. For example, in history, pupils in key stage 2 do not build up the historical knowledge they are presented with. Consequently, pupils cannot recall important previous learning about their current topic as they move through it. Subject leadership is in the early stages of development.

Pupils enjoy whole-class reading time and value their time in the school library. Teachers share stories with pupils every day and everyone in the school understands the importance of reading. However, despite successes in the national Year 1 phonics screening check, the teaching of phonics is not good enough.

In lessons, teachers' different ways of teaching pupils new sounds sometimes cause confusion. As a result, younger pupils sometimes fall behind in their understanding of phonics. In addition, the books teachers give pupils to practise their reading are not matched reliably to the phonics pupils are learning. When pupils fall behind,

teaching does not help them catch up in their phonics and reading quickly enough.

Children in the early years achieve well. They are happy and confident because of the warm relationships they have with staff. Teachers make sure that activities build on what children enjoy and know. Leaders have ensured, through recent improvements to the learning environment, that children are provided with interesting activities that help them to learn successfully, for example in mathematics.

Leaders understand the needs of those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) extremely well. Teachers carefully plan activities to help these pupils achieve the best possible outcomes. Leaders are swift to seek support from external agencies where necessary. Several parents and carers of children with SEND praise the support that their children receive.

Leaders have created an inclusive and welcoming school, built on a set of core Christian values. They take prompt and effective steps to ensure that pupils attend school regularly. As a result, pupils' attendance is well above the national average.

Leaders ensure that pupils experience many opportunities to support their personal development. For example, pupils have learned about school life in Rwanda. They enjoy taking part in the 'Andover Trees United' project. As a result, pupils become confident individuals. They learn to care for one another, for example through their roles as house captains, school councillors and junior librarians.

Reflecting leaders' high expectations for pupils' behaviour, staff are clear about how well pupils should behave in lessons. Pupils respond well. Staff give frequent reminders about the school's values, helping pupils to develop into responsible young citizens. Pupils work hard and try their best. They have plenty of opportunities to develop their talents and interests, for example through music and PE.

Leaders, including governors, are ambitious for the curriculum to improve quickly. They are putting effective plans into place to make sure that all staff receive the training and support they need, particularly those new to subject leadership. As a result, staff work as an effective team for the benefit of all the pupils.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders make sure that keeping pupils safe is their highest priority. All staff receive training and regular updates so that they know how to spot any concerns about a child's welfare. Everyone is confident in how to report any concerns. Records show that leaders respond to concerns quickly and, where needed, they challenge external agencies. This means that pupils get the help they need. Pupils are also taught how to keep themselves safe online and when crossing roads for example.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some foundation subjects, planning and teaching do not build pupils' knowledge logically and securely over time. Leaders need to ensure that the content of all subject plans is carefully chosen and sequenced, and then delivered as intended.
- Subject leadership is not yet well developed across the curriculum. Senior leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that subject leaders are well informed about the subjects they lead and well equipped to support and develop teaching effectively.
- Leaders need to ensure that an effective and consistent phonics programme is in place that enables pupils to learn phonics quickly and successfully. Pupils' reading books should be closely matched to their developing phonics knowledge.
- If pupils fall behind in phonics or reading, effective help should be given promptly so that they catch up.

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

Unique reference number	116321
Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	10111213
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	5 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	86
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Paul Nicoll
Headteacher	Cheryl Hawkings
Website	www.vernhamdeanschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	20 September 2018

Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- We met with the headteacher and an inspector spoke to a representative from the local authority and the diocese on the telephone.
- We did deep dives in these subjects: history, mathematics, reading and science. For each of these subjects, inspectors visited lessons to observe learning, looked at pupils' books and talked to leaders, teachers and pupils about learning. An inspector also observed a member of staff listening to pupils read.
- We held meetings with two governors, including the chair of the governing body, the special educational needs coordinator and the headteacher as the school's attendance, behaviour and pastoral lead.
- We checked the school's safeguarding policies and procedures and the school's single central record of checks on adults working in the school. Inspectors met with leaders, staff and pupils to check how effective safeguarding is in school.
- We met with parents at the school gate to seek their views.
- During the inspection, we met with groups of pupils from Years 3 to 6, observed lunchtimes and playtimes, and met with the lunchtime assistants.
- We examined a range of documents. These included the school's development

plans and local authority reviews, safeguarding documentation and various records relating to pupils' attendance.

Inspection team

Mineza Maher, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Debra Anderson

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
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