

# Inspection of West Alvington Church of England Academy

West Alvington, Kingsbridge, Devon TQ7 3PP

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Inspection dates: 3–4 March 2020

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| <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>Good</b>  |
| Previous inspection grade    | Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 |

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

West Alvington is a happy, small school. Pupils of different ages learn together in two classes. Pupils are safe and enjoy it here. Pupils form close friendships across age groups. Many speak of the school being 'a family'. Pupils behave well and are considerate and respectful to each other. They are polite and well mannered. Staff are caring and respectful to pupils. Pupils say that bullying is rare, and if it did happen staff would sort it out. There is a strong ethos of teamwork. Staff are proud to work at the school.

Leaders have worked hard to ensure that the curriculum is demanding for pupils. They receive rich curriculum experiences. Pupils do well in mathematics and reading. Teachers make sure that activities in other subjects develop the key knowledge and skills pupils need. Most pupils are excited to share their work. They are proud of their achievements.

Pupils enjoy the opportunities for learning beyond lessons. For example, forest school and residential visits. They join in with community events and raise money for charities. Pupils are proud of their fundraising for a local animal charity. Pupils have lots of opportunities to join in sports events and take part in performances at a local secondary school.

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

Leaders and governors have worked well together to ensure that the quality of education is good. There have been significant staff changes and other challenges. However, leaders' ambition to provide the best for the community has not wavered. Joint working with the multi-academy trust means that the school has access to wide knowledge and expertise. School staff receive the right support and training, so they can do their jobs well.

Leaders have designed a bespoke curriculum that builds on pupils' own experiences and covers national and international perspectives. Teachers use all the information they have about what pupils know and can do to adapt the curriculum on offer. They plan sequences of lessons carefully. Teachers ensure that when they introduce new content the curriculum is demanding enough. Pupils also revisit ideas that they have learned before. This means that pupils can talk about new concepts in different subjects. They also apply their learning, make links between subjects, and deepen their thinking.

The youngest children get a good start to school. Staff plan activities to match their interests and needs well. As a result, children thrive.

Leaders have ensured that there is a systematic approach to teaching phonics. Well-trained staff teach the phonics programme effectively. Younger pupils use and apply their phonic knowledge to read well. Teachers ensure that the books which pupils

read are matched to the sounds pupils already know. Older pupils who have gaps in their knowledge or pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) get timely support and catch up well.

In the class with older pupils, pupils analyse the content of the books they read in depth. Nonetheless, although pupils say they read often, the way they choose books is not structured enough. Not all pupils gain the love of reading they should.

Pupils learn well in mathematics. They apply their mathematical knowledge in number work to reason and solve mathematical problems confidently. In history, pupils acquire appropriate skills and knowledge. Younger pupils talk with confidence about the monarchy and lines of succession. Older pupils are fascinated by their studies of the Tudors and the Second World War. They are developing a deeper understanding of chronology, comparison and empathy.

Pupils usually behave well. They are attentive to staff and follow instructions. However, there are occasions when a few pupils lose interest and are not determined enough in their learning. The quality of work that a minority of pupils produce is not reflective of what they know and can do. Teachers do not pick this up immediately.

Leaders are working tirelessly to improve pupils' attendance. They have raised expectations because of the strong systems in place. Leaders support individual pupils and families well. However, some pupils still do not attend regularly enough.

There are a range of opportunities for pupils to develop wider interests. Pupils participate in local sports events such as cross-country and football. Staff and leaders talk readily about how key values inform the way they work. They model teamwork, reflection and kindness to the pupils well. West Alvington is a very inclusive school. Pupils and staff value what individuals bring to their community. Pupils with SEND are supported well and see success.

The curriculum provides opportunities to learn about Britain, different cultures or local issues. However, pupils' knowledge is sometimes superficial, and they are not always able to apply it to their own experiences.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders' desire to support the pupil, the family, and the community underpins the school's work in safeguarding. Staff know families well. They are aware of any issues. They are creative in working together to find ways to help.

Leaders ensure that safeguarding policies and procedures are clear. Procedures for checking, recruiting and training staff are in place. The trust and governors regularly monitor the quality of the school's work in this area. Pupils say they feel safe and

their parents agree. Pupils are knowledgeable about how to keep themselves safe when using the internet.

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

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

- Occasionally, pupils are not determined in their learning. In such cases, pupils' work is not of high quality. Staff should ensure that the curriculum motivates pupils to do their very best. Leaders need to ensure that staff maintain high expectations of pupils in every curriculum subject.
- Some pupils do not attend well enough. These pupils miss out on key learning. Leaders need to continue their work to tackle non-attendance. Leaders need to promote a strong culture of high attendance so that any pupils who have missed learning previously catch up and achieve well.
- Pupils are not developing a deep enough knowledge of fundamental British values. Pupils study aspects of British life, other cultures and religions in the curriculum. However, they cannot apply what they have learned to their own experiences. Leaders need to ensure that there are opportunities in the curriculum for pupils to explore key issues in depth, and relate these to themselves, and to life in West Alvington and to its community.

## **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 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

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| <b>Unique reference number</b>             | 144070   |
| <b>Local authority</b>                     | Devon  |
| <b>Inspection number</b>                   | 10122317   |
| <b>Type of school</b>                      | Primary  |
| <b>School category</b>                     | Academy converter  |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                 | 2 to 11  |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                    | Mixed  |
| <b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b> | 35   |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>               | Board of trustees  |
| <b>Chair of trust</b>                      | Ryan Hewitt  |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                         | Katie Coombe   |
| <b>Website</b>                             | <a href="http://westalvington-lap.co.uk">westalvington-lap.co.uk</a> |
| <b>Date of previous inspection</b>         | Not previously inspected   |

## Information about this school

- The school opened in April 2017, when it joined the Learning Academy Partnership.
- There have been a number of changes of leadership. The current headteacher was appointed in September 2019. She is supported by an executive headteacher.
- The school was graded as good in the last statutory inspection of Anglican and Methodist schools (SIAMS), in November 2019.

## Information about this inspection

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

- We held meetings with the executive headteacher, headteacher and several leaders from the trust. The lead inspector also met with the chief executive officer of the trust and two members of the local governing body.
- The lead inspector held meetings with the special educational needs coordinator and the early years leaders. He also met with staff responsible for safeguarding and attendance. He spoke with school staff. This included staff who are newly qualified.

- Documents related to safeguarding were reviewed. We checked that safeguarding policies and procedures are implemented effectively.
- The lead inspector took account of the 11 responses to Parent View. He also considered the 11 responses to the survey for staff. There were no responses to the pupil survey.
- We did deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics and history. This entailed discussions with subject leaders, visits to lessons, looking at examples of pupils' work, discussions with teachers, discussions with pupils and listening to children read. We also looked at pupils' work in a range of different subjects to see how well the curriculum is applied.

### **Inspection team**

Stephen McShane, lead inspector                      Ofsted Inspector

Martin Greenwood                                      Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate  
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