

# Inspection of Alderbury and West Grimstead Church of England Primary School

Firs Road, Alderbury, Salisbury, Wiltshire SP5 3BD

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Inspection dates: 28 and 29 September 2021

## **Overall effectiveness**

## **Requires improvement**

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The quality of education

**Requires improvement**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Good**

Personal development

**Good**

Leadership and management

**Requires improvement**

Early years provision

**Good**

Previous inspection grade

Requires improvement

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

Leaders at the school are ambitious for pupils. They want pupils to receive a curriculum that will excite and engage them, but this is not yet in place. Leaders and governors have started driving improvements to achieve their vision. However, the quality of education that pupils receive is not good enough.

There have been many changes of staff since the last inspection. This has had an impact on the rate of improvement. However, leaders have created a harmonious environment on which to build and develop their curriculum to ensure that it meets the needs of learners, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

Pupils like coming to school. They value their friendships. They are happy and know that staff care for them. Pupils feel safe and respected from an early age. Parents and carers overwhelmingly support this view.

Staff have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Younger pupils arrive with excitement about what the day will bring. Pupils conduct themselves well. They show respect and are polite. Low-level disruption is rare. The relationships between staff and pupils are strong. Adults know pupils well and nurture their individual needs. Pupils say that bullying sometimes happens, but when it does, it is dealt with quickly.

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

Everyone at the school shares the headteacher's vision, 'Foundations for Life'. He is highly valued and has galvanised the school community. Staff speak positively of the support they receive. Parents are very appreciative of the provision and care provided to their children, particularly throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

Leaders understand the importance of pupils gaining secure reading skills as they move through the school. New books have been purchased to interest and excite pupils. In the early years, children get off to a good start with their phonics. This ensures that they are well prepared for Year 1. Adults create opportunities for children to practise and recall their sounds regularly. However, there is an inconsistency in the quality of support for older pupils. Not all adults have the necessary training to guide those pupils who are still struggling to read effectively. At times, books do not match the sounds that pupils know. This slows their progress in becoming fluent readers.

Older pupils understand the importance of learning to read. Pupils told us that 'reading takes you into different worlds with pictures in your mind'. However, some pupils, particularly boys, do not enjoy reading.

Work to develop subjects across the wider curriculum is in its infancy. Current plans do not consistently build on what pupils know and can do. Essential knowledge is not always clearly identified to support new learning. As a result, pupils struggle to recall what they have learned in the past. This hinders them from building up their knowledge over time. For example, pupils learning about the Vikings in history could not recall what they had learned in geography when discussing the parts of the world the Vikings invaded.

Subject leadership is still developing. Staff who are new to their role do not have the knowledge they need to lead or plan their subject without support. As a result, they do not fully understand how their subject should be organised and sequenced.

Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. They are attentive and work with a purpose. Pupils show respect for one another and adults. They understand why they should behave kindly towards others. On the rare occasion when pupils misbehave, staff deal with this quickly, so that learning is not interrupted.

Pastoral support is strong. Pupils talk confidently about right and wrong and why it is important to do the right thing. They appreciate and respect differences. Pupils explained to us that it is good to be different. Pupils are confident and resilient.

Staff understand the individual needs of pupils, including those with SEND. The special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) works alongside teachers to develop personalised pupil targets. Children who require extra support in the early years are quickly identified.

Governors have rightly focused on bringing about stability at the school. They have supported leaders in creating a cohesive team. Governors have an accurate view of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They have plans in place to increase their challenge to school leaders and to secure better information about the quality of the curriculum.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and staff are vigilant and keep pupils safe from harm. This is because all staff are well trained. They know how to identify a child who might be at risk of harm and what action to take. Pupils are confident to talk to staff if they have a problem. When needed, leaders work with external agencies to provide support and help for pupils. Leaders carry out appropriate checks on the suitability of staff.

Pupils feel safe in school. They know how to maintain that feeling of safety when they are online.

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

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

- There are gaps in pupils' phonics knowledge, particularly in key stage 2. At times, books do not match the sounds that pupils are learning. Therefore, some pupils do not read accurately or as fluently as they could or enjoy their reading. Leaders need to ensure that staff have phonics training and that books match the sounds that pupils know. This will enable those who have fallen behind to catch up more quickly.
- New subject leaders are not secure in how to select the key knowledge pupils should learn in their subject. Leaders, including governors, need to ensure that staff receive appropriate professional development to enhance whole-curriculum planning.
- The school's curriculum is not clearly sequenced or strategically planned. As a result, pupils, including those with SEND, do not build secure knowledge over time. Leaders need to be systematic in their approach to planning the curriculum. They need to ensure that all subjects have a clear progression of knowledge so that pupils know more and remember more.
- Assessment information in the wider curriculum is not precise enough to show what pupils know and understand. Therefore, pupils have gaps in subject-specific knowledge. Leaders need to ensure that teachers check what pupils know and can do.

## 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.

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>             | 126445   |
| <b>Local authority</b>                     | Wiltshire  |
| <b>Inspection number</b>                   | 10200960   |
| <b>Type of school</b>                      | Primary  |
| <b>School category</b>                     | Voluntary aided  |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                 | 4 to 11  |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                    | Mixed  |
| <b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b> | 167  |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>               | The governing body   |
| <b>Chair of governing body</b>             | John Fuller  |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                         | Wesley Thorpe  |
| <b>Website</b>                             | <a href="http://www.alderbury.wilts.sch.uk">www.alderbury.wilts.sch.uk</a> |
| <b>Date of previous inspection</b>         | 12 and 13 December 2017, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005         |

## Information about this school

- Alderbury and West Grimstead is a voluntary aided church school. The school is in the Diocese of Salisbury.
- At the most recent section 48 inspection of denominational education in September 2016, the school received a judgement of good.
- There have been significant staff changes within the teaching staff since the previous inspection.
- There is a breakfast club for pupils who attend the school.

## Information about this inspection

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

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, the SENCo, a representative from the local authority, groups of staff and representatives from the governing body.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, science and history. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans and visited a sample of lessons. They also spoke to teachers and pupils and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- An inspector listened to pupils from Years 1, 2 and 3 read to an adult.
- Inspectors looked at how the school keeps pupils safe. The lead inspector met with the designated safeguarding lead. An inspector scrutinised the school's checks on recruitment.
- Inspectors considered 70 responses to the Ofsted online survey, Parent View, including 42 free-text responses and 20 responses to the staff survey.

### **Inspection team**

Heather Barraclough, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Marcia Northeast

Ofsted Inspector

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