

# Inspection of The Bay Church of England School

Winchester Park Road, Isle of Wight, Sandown, Isle of Wight PO36 9BA

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Inspection dates: 21 to 22 February 2023

**Overall effectiveness** **Good**

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The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Early years provision **Good**

Previous inspection grade Good

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

This is less and less a school of two halves. Leaders' determined efforts have, bit by bit, raised standards in the secondary phase to meet those already established in the primary phase. Expectations for pupils to work hard and be successful are evident throughout. Consequently, pupils gain the knowledge they need for a successful future.

In the main, pupils conduct themselves well, understanding what adults expect of them. The courteous and enthusiastic behaviour of younger pupils translates into a calm atmosphere in the secondary phase of the school. Most pupils are positive about their experiences of education. Older pupils recognise how behaviour has improved over time, as expectations have risen.

Pupils are highly accepting of each other's differences. They feel safe in school, cared for by adults who understand their needs well. Work to improve pupils' understanding of bullying means they are reporting concerns more often than in the past. This enables leaders to address issues successfully when they arise.

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

Since the last inspection, The Bay has changed significantly. Leaders have established a secondary phase, taking in pupils and staff from a nearby school that closed. This has been no mean feat, made harder by the challenges and interruptions of the COVID-19 pandemic. Leaders have successfully established an atmosphere of trust among the staff. This is enabling everyone to work towards a common goal of sustaining and improving standards in the school. Working links between primary and secondary staff are beginning to emerge.

Children get off to a solid start in the early years. Leaders understand the priorities for children's learning and development. Adults design activities that stimulate children's interests and respond to their emerging learning needs. Children play happily together, taking turns and showing kindness towards each other.

In the recent past, younger pupils were not taught to read well enough. Leaders acted swiftly to address this weakness in the school's provision. A new curriculum is being delivered successfully by well-trained staff. Consequently, most younger pupils are now reading with accuracy and fluency appropriate to their age.

Leaders are ambitious for pupils to learn well. Across both phases of the school, pupils study a suitably broad range of subjects, aligning with what is laid out in the national curriculum. Leaders have recently changed how the secondary curriculum is structured, to help increase how many pupils achieve a more academic suite of GCSE qualifications by the end of Year 11. Older pupils are currently working at a higher standard than was the case by the end of key stage 4 last year.

Across the range of subjects and phases, curriculum planning is sufficiently well established. Leaders and teachers have given careful thought to what pupils need to learn and in what order. In most subjects and phases, their plans are being implemented successfully, with the remaining areas currently being developed. Staff use a consistent approach to check on pupils' progress through the planned curriculum. However, these checks do not routinely help teachers to pinpoint and then build precisely on pupils' prior learning. At times, teachers focus more on examination techniques than on the knowledge pupils have learned.

A recent focus on subject-specific vocabulary is helping older pupils to communicate their understanding more successfully than in the past. A whole-school approach to promoting reading is also evolving, with appropriate support in place for pupils in the secondary phase who need extra help to access the curriculum successfully.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are catered for extremely well. Their needs are identified, understood and met by the leaders and adults who work sensitively with them. In particular, pupils in the specialist resource base make excellent progress, integrating well into the main part of the secondary phase of the school. Pupils with SEND access the full curriculum, achieving relevant qualifications that prepare them for suitable post-16 education, employment and training. The small number of pupils who attend off-site provision receive a suitable education that meets their needs.

Leaders place appropriate emphasis on deliberately supporting pupils' personal development. The personal, social and health education curriculum meets statutory requirements and is delivered in a timely way by staff who are well trained. Pupils have access to a range of opportunities to become active citizens, for example through charity work, being cyber ambassadors and contributing to the local community. Careers information, education, advice and guidance makes effective use of expertise from local colleges and apprenticeship providers, fulfilling the requirements of the provider access legislation.

Leaders and governors are suitably informed about the school's strengths and priorities for improvement. This has helped them to make recent rapid improvements to pupils' achievements in the secondary phase of the school. The impact of their work to monitor standards beyond academic outcomes is less clear.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have invested heavily in staff training, reflecting how they prioritise this aspect of the school's work. In each phase of the school, clearly defined routines ensure that staff report any concerns they may have about pupils. This enables leaders to act quickly and effectively when pupils are identified as being at risk of harm.

Staff are alert to pupils who may be at additional risk of harm, including some with SEND. They use a broad range of opportunities to help teach pupils how to keep themselves safe from a range of age-appropriate risks, including around harmful sexual behaviour.

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

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

- Teachers' checks on what pupils know and can do are not consistently precise across the age and subject range. Consequently, gaps in pupils' learning are not always identified and addressed as quickly as they could be. This leads to pupils' learning in some foundation subjects being less secure than it is for others. Leaders should ensure that assessment routines enable teachers to identify pupils' next steps in learning so that their future planning meets these specifically.
- Although assessment and monitoring systems are in place, leaders are not currently using them as well as they could to evaluate the impact of their wider work. This risks them not prioritising improvements beyond those linked to pupils' academic outcomes. Leaders and governors should now evaluate and evolve how they assure themselves of the impact of their wider work, so they can hone in on the next phase of school improvement priorities.

## **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.

## **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>	136013
<b>Local authority</b>	Isle of Wight
<b>Inspection number</b>	10241498
<b>Type of school</b>	All-through
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	1255
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Peter Higgin
<b>Headteacher</b>	Duncan Mills (Executive headteacher)
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.bayceschool.org">www.bayceschool.org</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	20 February 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- When The Bay was last inspected, it was a primary school. In September 2018, when another local secondary school closed, it became an all-through school. Most staff and pupils from the predecessor secondary school transferred across to The Bay at that point.
- Pupils from the primary phase make up around a third of the pupils in the secondary phase. The remaining secondary-age pupils join the school from a number of other feeder primary schools at the start of Year 7.
- The school is based on two sites – one for the primary phase and one for the secondary phase. It does not have a sixth form. A head of school presides over the primary site and there is a headteacher in charge of the secondary site. The executive headteacher holds responsibility for the school as a whole. The secondary headteacher has only recently been made substantive in their post.
- The school operates a breakfast and after-school club, which is held on the primary phase site.
- The Bay includes a specialist resource base for pupils aged 11 to 16 who are diagnosed with autism spectrum condition. Places are allocated and funded by

the local authority. Where appropriate, pupils from the specialist resource base attend lessons alongside their peers in the main part of the school.

- The school has an above-average proportion of pupils with SEND.
- A very small number of pupils receive their education at the Island Learning Centre, which is a pupil referral unit registered with Ofsted. Six other settings, which are not required to be registered, provide some of the education for a very small number of other pupils.
- This is a voluntary controlled school which promotes a Christian ethos. When the school's religious character was last inspected in November 2017, it was judged to be outstanding.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 7 to 13 with information about and engagement with approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

## Information about this inspection

The inspector(s) carried out this graded 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 leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the executive headteacher, the primary head of school, the secondary headteacher and other senior and middle leaders, including the special educational needs coordinator and the early years leader. They also spoke to representatives of the governing body and of the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives into early reading (in the primary phase), English (in the secondary phase), mathematics, art and physical education. This involved meeting with leaders who are responsible for these subjects, visiting a sample of lessons, talking to teachers and pupils, and looking at samples of pupils' work.
- Arrangements for safeguarding were scrutinised. Inspectors reviewed the school's central record of recruitment checks on staff. They explored how staff training, reporting systems and leaders' actions contribute to safeguarding in the school.
- Inspectors met with groups of pupils and staff to gather a broad range of evidence about the school. They spoke to parents at the start of day on the primary site and took account of 182 responses to the Ofsted Parent View online questionnaire. Survey responses from 112 members of staff were also considered.
- Inspectors also reviewed a range of policies and other relevant documentation provided by leaders and from the school website.

## Inspection team

Kathryn Moles, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Sara Staggs	His Majesty's Inspector
James Stuart	His Majesty's Inspector
Julia Mortimore	Ofsted Inspector
Paul James	Ofsted Inspector
Louise Agle	Ofsted Inspector

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