

Inspection of Four Marks Church of England Primary School

Five Lanes End, Four Marks, Alton, Hampshire GU34 5AS

Inspection dates: 21 and 22 February 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Outstanding
Previous inspection grade	Outstanding

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy, polite and confident. Leaders have created an extremely nurturing and safe environment for them that fosters kindness and tolerance. The values of the school are important, and pupils of all ages clearly know what these mean. This is a school where everyone is welcome, bullying rarely happens and pupils are taught how to stay safe. Pupils behave exceptionally well and enjoy coming to school.

Pupils also learn well, and leaders have high expectations for all. Pupils enjoy discussing what they are learning about and take pride in their work. They take an active role in story time, when they enjoy exploring the messages that are contained in the stories they read and hear. This includes the very youngest children, who also regularly share stories, songs and rhymes.

Leaders have ensured that pupils have many opportunities to take responsibility and play an active part in school life. This is something pupils do with relish. Older pupils talk enthusiastically about how they support younger pupils through their work as playleaders, librarians and lunch leaders.

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

Leaders have a clear vision for the school and have communicated this effectively to all staff, pupils and parents and carers. Subject leaders have created an ambitious curriculum with high expectations for all, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). In the subjects where this is strongest, leaders and teachers have carefully considered the knowledge and skills pupils require, beginning in early years. Teachers make the right adaptations for pupils, checking carefully what pupils have learned. Pupils are taught to read effectively, and those who need additional help are quickly identified and supported to become fluent readers. Leaders have also ensured that staff have the knowledge and training required so they can make timely decisions about pupils' next steps. While pupils achieve well in most subjects, this is not fully consistent across the curriculum. In some subjects, leaders have not considered exactly what pupils need to learn and the order in which they want pupils to learn it.

The curriculum for children in early years is exceptional. Leaders identify children's starting points accurately and set ambitious goals for them. Leaders have broken these goals down into small, specific steps. They have also ensured that every activity has been designed to link closely with what children need to learn and the skills they need to develop. Leaders have been creative in their use of resources and, as a result, children are thriving. They are introduced to the phonic sounds needed for reading at the earliest possible stage and are also taught mathematical vocabulary so they are well prepared to move up through the school. Interactions between adults and children are of high quality. Staff encourage children to pursue their own interests, and there is a sharp focus on developing their independence and resilience.

Leaders have provided pupils with a wide variety of opportunities to develop their own interests and talents, including for those pupils with SEND. There is a range of clubs, including music and book clubs, and pupils are also involved in fundraising activities and community events. The programme for personal, social and health education has been carefully designed by leaders to ensure that pupils are taught about the values of the school as well as the key elements of healthy lifestyles, positive relationships and democracy. The school council and other forms of pupil leadership are highly valued by pupils. Leaders have also worked closely with parents and the wider community to consider carefully the curriculum for relationships and sex education and for health education.

The personal development programme that leaders have designed is used well, so pupils know how to behave. Pupils show high levels of respect towards one another, including in outdoor spaces and when moving around the school. This begins in early years. When pupils find things more difficult, staff support them well. Pupils also make use of the 'Rainbow Room' to get the help and advice they need around their feelings and behaviour. Pupils are encouraged to manage their emotions effectively.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders take a robust approach towards safeguarding, and there is a strong culture throughout the school. Staff are knowledgeable about risks, and the training they have received means that they identify, record and report any concerns swiftly. Records are thorough, and actions are taken quickly to ensure that pupils receive the support needed, including through work with external agencies. Governors are knowledgeable and monitor safeguarding processes thoroughly. Leaders take appropriate measures to ensure that all relevant checks take place before staff begin to work in the school. Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe, especially when online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The curriculum in some subjects is not yet securely and consistently embedded, as leaders have not always identified and sequenced knowledge carefully. Pupils are therefore not always confident in recalling and using important knowledge and skills as well as they could. Leaders should continue to monitor the full implementation of the curriculum to ensure that all pupils acquire the knowledge they need in readiness for the next stages of their education.

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

Unique reference number	116288
Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	10256354
Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	307
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Mike Smith
Headteacher	Veronica Stoodley
Website	www.fourmarksprimary.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	22 to 23 March 2010, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The headteacher has been in post since 2012.
- The school is part of the Diocese of Winchester and had its most recent Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools in March 2022, when it was judged to be good.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors 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 headteacher and other leaders, such as the special educational needs coordinator and the early years lead.

- The lead inspector met with a group of governors, including the chair of the local governing body.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics, art, physical education and history. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at a sample of pupils' work.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour around the school and in lessons.
- Inspectors also met with groups of pupils and spoke to a range of pupils in and outside lessons. Inspectors also considered pupils' responses to the Ofsted pupil survey.
- To inspect safeguarding, inspectors checked the single central record of recruitment checks, talked to leaders responsible for safeguarding and looked at the school's safeguarding records and documents. Inspectors also talked to a range of staff and pupils about safeguarding.
- A range of the school's documentation was scrutinised, including leaders' evaluations of the effectiveness of the school, information about pupils' behaviour and attendance, and minutes of meetings of the governing body.
- Inspectors met with members of staff to discuss the school's work and considered responses to the confidential Ofsted staff survey. They also looked at the responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View.

Inspection team

Zoe Enser, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Toby Martlew	Ofsted Inspector
Debra Mansfield	Ofsted Inspector

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