

Inspection of a good school: Albury Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Church End, Albury, Hertfordshire SG11 2JQ

Inspection date:

13 June 2023

Outcome

Albury Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils and adults together make the school a welcoming place. Pupils play and learn harmoniously. They love spending time with one another, jumping from tyre to tyre in the playground, setting up a shop in the forest area or sitting chatting on a bench. The warm relationships between pupils and adults mean that pupils are safe, happy and know they always have an adult to turn to if they need help.

Pupils know that when play stops and work starts it is time to focus and do their best. Adults set high standards and pupils live up to these. Pupils take pride in their learning. They know right from wrong. The school's values, such as friendship and respect, shine through in all that pupils do.

Pupils know everyone is an individual and it is okay to be yourself. They celebrate differences between themselves and others. Pupils develop a rich appreciation of different cultures, religions and beliefs. Visits to places of religious worship and museums broaden pupils' horizons. Older pupils experience camping out in the school grounds and spend a week in the Isle of Wight. These opportunities help pupils develop greater independence and resilience by the time they leave the school at the end of Year 6.

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

Pupils learn an interesting and exciting curriculum. The foundations laid in the early years help pupils build on what they know as they move through the school. For example, the youngest children learn how to read maps and acquire the vocabulary they need to describe where things are. This sets them up well to learn about more complex maps as they get older. Leaders have carefully designed the curriculum to make sure pupils have opportunities to practice and apply their learning regularly. This helps them remember much of what they learn.

Teachers explain new concepts clearly. They regularly check that pupils understand and remember what they are taught. Teachers' strong subject knowledge means they quickly correct pupils if they misunderstand something.

The youngest pupils learn to read well. From their time in Nursery, children enjoy hearing a range of stories, poems and rhymes. Adults are expert in teaching early reading. They quickly pick up if a pupil is finding reading tricky and make sure they receive additional help. All pupils enjoy reading a range of different books. They have the opportunity to read and listen to stories from a range of different cultures. Pupils enjoy these stories, while learning about the lives and beliefs of people from different backgrounds.

Children in the Nursery provision receive high levels of care and support. Adults working with the youngest children skilfully use questions to develop children's understanding when learning. They encourage them to use a growing range of words. The weekly 'toddler group' held in school allows pre-school children to get used to school before they start.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) access the full curriculum. Activities in class are usually adapted to take account of these pupils' needs. This means that pupils with SEND learn well. However, the support plans for some pupils with SEND do not set out what these pupils need to know, remember or be able to do with sufficient clarity. This means they do not always receive the precise support they need.

Pupils behave extremely well. They include one another in games at breaktime so no one is left out. Lessons are calm. Pupils concentrate well in class. This includes children in Nursery and Reception. The youngest children develop independence because they know the clear rules and routines set for them.

Pupils learn much about the wider world and how to take care of themselves. They understand different emotions, such as jealousy. They have an age-appropriate understanding of how to manage such feelings when they arise. Pupils are supported to take care of their mental health and are provided with effective strategies to use if they need to.

Staff are proud to work in school. Senior leaders take great care to manage their workload and look after their well-being. Regular, useful training is provided by leaders to ensure teachers keep their skills and knowledge up to date.

Governors provide a balance of support and challenge for leaders. They receive useful information from leaders as to how well aspects of the school are doing. They make visits, and use information from the local authority adviser, to check this for themselves. Governors regularly review their own skills. They take action to bolster their own knowledge in aspects where this is needed.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Adults are well trained and know what to do if they have a concern about a pupil's welfare. They record concerns clearly, which ensures leaders can take the right action to help pupils and families receive the right support. All pre-employment checks on staff are carried out and recorded with diligence. Governors check carefully to make sure leaders are doing all they can to keep pupils safe.

Adults help pupils to understand the risks they face and how to keep themselves safe. Pupils know how to stay safe when using the internet, along with the rules they need to follow when crossing the road.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Support for some pupils with SEND lacks precision. This is because adults have not set out clearly enough in pupils' support plans what they need to know, learn and remember. As a result, the additional support some pupils receive is not always tightly focused. Leaders should ensure that staff put in place specific, measurable and time-focused support to ensure that these pupils achieve well.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in September 2014.

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	117419
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	10286248
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	54
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Victoria Clayden-Smith
Headteacher	Sarah Stevens
Website	www.alburyandpullerschools.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	25 April 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is federated with another local school. The headteacher leads both schools.
- The school has a Christian religious character. The school's most recent section 48 inspection took place in October 2019. The school's next section 48 inspection will be within eight school years.
- The school has provision for two-year-old children.
- The school does not use any alternative providers.
- During the inspection, the headteacher was absent due to illness. The school is currently being led by an interim headteacher.

Information about this inspection

- 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 carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, and geography. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with some pupils about their

learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The lead inspector listened to pupils from Years 1 and 2 read to an adult.

- Inspectors held meetings with the interim headteacher and other senior leaders, including the special educational needs coordinator. The lead inspector met with members of governing board and held a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority.
- To inspect safeguarding, inspectors scrutinised the single central record of staff personnel checks and reviewed safeguarding paperwork and systems. Inspectors spoke with leaders, teachers, support staff, members of the governing body, and pupils to evaluate the culture of safeguarding in the school.
- Inspectors considered 31 responses to Ofsted Parent View, the online survey for parents, 12 responses to Ofsted's staff survey and 29 responses to Ofsted's pupil survey.

Inspection team

Nathan Lowe, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Katherine Douglas

His Majesty's Inspector

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