

Inspection of a good school: Western Downland Church of England Aided Primary School

Rockbourne, Fordingbridge, Hampshire SP6 3NA

Inspection dates:

12 and 13 September 2023

Outcome

Western Downland Church of England Aided Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

The school's vision of giving pupils 'the roots to grow and wings to fly' is recognised by everyone. Pupils know and understand the school's core values of love, righteousness and fellowship. They strive to live these out in all they do. Due to their shared understanding of the values, pupils treat each other with kindness and compassion.

Playtimes are happy occasions. Pupils play together harmoniously and make good use of the school grounds. They know that the three school rules of being ready, respectful and safe are important. Older pupils are proud of their roles, which help keep everyone safe. This includes being health and safety ambassadors, who are responsible for checking that play equipment is not damaged.

Pupils are enthusiastic about their learning in school. They know that adults support them to get better and that, when they need further clarification, someone will help. The school's curriculum is continually reviewed and adapted, so that it helps everyone to achieve well. All stakeholders are particularly proud of the forest school provision. Starting from Nursery, children benefit from attending each week. They are keen to share what they learn about the different elements of nature.

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

The school has successfully refined the curriculum so that the most important knowledge pupils must know is clearly identified. This begins in Nursery, where children quickly learn the routines of school life. Some of the curriculum improvements are new this academic year and are still being embedded. Consequently, staff do not always have the subject knowledge to design activities which enable pupils to learn the intended information. This is being addressed, but there is more work to do. Staff now focus on making sure that pupils can recall the key content by revisiting it regularly. Although staff ask questions to

check what pupils have remembered, they do not always have an accurate picture of what pupils can do.

A highly inclusive environment permeates throughout the school. All pupils are supported to access the curriculum and wider school life. The robust systems for identifying pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) result in these pupils getting the help they need. Staff make adaptations to learning so all pupils can learn alongside one another.

Reading is given the highest priority in school. As soon as children start in Reception, they begin learning phonics. Children are very well supported to learn the routine of phonics sessions. This familiarity helps them to achieve well. Due to the sharp focus on phonics, outcomes are high. Every pupil is supported to keep up with their peers through additional daily sessions. On a few occasions, the extra support that pupils with SEND receive is not as precise as it could be. The school provides training for all staff to ensure they have good subject knowledge. Pupils across the school enjoy reading. Those who are still learning to read practise with books that are matched to the sounds they know. This helps to build their confidence.

Everyone has high expectations for behaviour in school. Children in Nursery are taught these from the outset. Due to the strong transition from Nursery to Reception, children understand the shared routines and rules to follow. This includes sitting on their carpet spot and listening carefully. As pupils progress through the school, they are well supported to understand the importance of the school rules. As a result, there is generally a calm and productive environment across the school.

The school ensures that all pupils have access to a broad range of experiences. This includes residential trips of increasing length in key stage 2. Pupils are enthusiastic about the clubs they can take part in. All pupils are supported to attend a club or activity. Older pupils are keen to discuss the responsibilities they are encouraged to take on. They take the application process seriously and understand that this will help to prepare them for future life. The office support team is proud of its important role in passing on messages, while the 'Cyber Ambassadors' understand how they can help others to stay safe online. The school has a well-thought-out personal, social and health education programme, which supports pupils in understanding themselves, the world around them and important matters such as staying healthy.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Delivery of the curriculum in a few subjects is still being refined. In these subjects, staff do not always design tasks which allow pupils to learn the most important information.

The school needs to ensure that all staff understand how best to support pupils in acquiring the intended knowledge.

- In a small number of subjects, the school has not fully considered how best to assess what pupils have learned. This means that there is not always an accurate picture of what pupils have remembered over time. The school needs to continue to refine assessment systems and practice, so the precise knowledge pupils remember is understood.

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 April 2012.

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' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	116387
Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	10241830
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	182
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Duncan Bailey
Headteacher	Alice Tubbs
Website	www.westerndownland.hants.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	5 July 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Diocese of Salisbury. The last inspection of the school's religious character was in June 2017.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.
- There is an on-site breakfast club.
- The school operates across two sites.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with the headteacher and the deputy headteacher. She also met with other school leaders, staff and pupils.

- The inspector met with six governors, including the chair of the governing body. She also spoke with a representative from Hampshire local authority.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, science and history. For each deep dive, the inspector discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspector also looked at books, visited a sample of lessons and spoke to leaders about early mathematics.
- To inspect safeguarding, the inspector checked the single central record of recruitment checks and talked to leaders responsible for safeguarding. The inspector also talked to a range of staff and pupils informally.
- The inspector considered the responses to the confidential staff survey and spoke to a range of staff about their views of the school.
- The inspector took account of the 39 responses to the Ofsted Parent View questionnaire and the additional 30 free-text responses. The inspector talked with some parents on the second morning of the inspection.
- The inspector met with a range of pupils to discuss their views about the school and talked to pupils informally during social times and in lessons.
- The inspector reviewed a range of documentation, including the school development plan and school self-evaluation.

Inspection team

Sara Staggs, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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